

THE
CHRISTIANS
Defence
AGAINST THE
FEARS
OF
DEATH.

With Seasonable

DIRECTIONS


How to prepare our Selves to Dye well.

Written Originally in *FRENCH*,
By the late Reverend Divine of the Protestant
Church of *PARIS*,
CHAR. DRELINCOURT.

And Translated into *ENGLISH*
By *M. D'ASSIGNY, B. D.*

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T *HIS Book in the Original, hath been so well approved of, by all Persons, though of different Judgements in Religion, that it hath been Fifteen times Printed in France, besides what hath been done in Holland, and elsewhere in other Languages; it is of very great use to Divines for Funeral Sermons; and is very fit to be given away by well-disposed Persons at Funerals, and of excellent Use to every Christian Reader.*



Not in file

Submitted



To the Right Honourable,
HENEAGE Lord *FINCH*,
Baron of *DAVENTRY*,
Lord Keeper of the Great Seal
O F
ENGLAND.

My LORD,

I*T is the common Practise of pretenders to Learning, to seek the Favour of Persons, of your Lordships Eminency, Nobility, and Piety, and to judge their Labours imperfect, if they inscribe not in the Frontispiece some Great NAME, to secure them against the attempts of Prejudice and Mistake. I conceive that I should*

wrong too much, our Religious and Ingenious Nation, and this Treatise, if I did entertain any such Fear, and alledge

The Epistle Dedicatory.

it as the Cause of this Dedication to your Lordship; for I am perswaded, that none will be so great an Enemy to himself, and so singular in his Judgement, to be offended at that which intends to protect him against our most dreadful Adversary, Death; at that which hath met with such an Universal Welcome, amongst all our neighbouring Nations, that it hath appeared in many Languages, and been generally embraced in those Countreys, by all Men that are named Christians.

But here I must freely acknowledge the Cause of this ambitious Address. Your Honour is worthily esteemed One of the most Glorious Examples of Religion and Justice amongst us: In imitation therefore of the Reverend Author, I do Humbly intreat your Lordship, to give me the Liberty to shew your Honour in the beginning of this Defence against the fears of Death, That my Christian Reader may look upon an Original and a
Co-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Copy together, and see the Practise, as well as the Discovery of the solid Comforts against Death. I shall not attempt to set forth this noble Original, my weak abilities cannot so well discover and expose it to our view, as our daily Experience and Observation. Your Honours Vertues, Liberality, and Devotion, are visible to us all; and the whole Nation takes notice of your Lordships Family, to have been always very fruitful of the most experienced Men in the Law, the most renowned for Justice, and the most remarkable for Piety and Religion. And at present, we see (by God's Goodness) several Illustrious Branches proceeding from your Honour; Branches that flourish already to our great Admiration and Joy.

By them the Honour and Reputation of your Noble Family will be for ever supported and defended against Death and Unconstancy, as your Lordships Person and Name, are, and shall be by your Piety and Care of Religion. God Grant unto
your

The Epistle Dedicatory.

*your Honour and Family, a Continuance
and Increase of his Earthly Blessings, ac-
cording to his * Promise, and after
this mortal Life, God Grant to you,
and your Posterity, the fruition of his E-
ternal Bliss in Heaven. This shall ever
be the Prayer of,*

My Lord,

Your Lordships most Humble,

And most faithful Servant,

M. D' ASSIGNY.

I

The CHRISTIAN'S
CONSOLATIONS
Against the
F E A R S
O F
D E A T H.

C H A P. I.

*That there is nothing more dreadful than Death, to
such as have no hope in God.*

AN Holy Man stiles Death very significantly, *The King of Terrors*; that is to say, The most terrible of all other things: for there is nothing that we can imagine in the world more dreadful and more odious than Death. It is possible to decline the edge of drawn Swords, to close the Lyons jaws, to quench the Fires fury; but when Death shoots its poisoned Arrows, when it opens its Infernal Jaws,
B and

and when it sends forth its Devouring Flames, it is altogether impossible to secure our selves; impossible it is to prevent or decline its merciless fury. There is an infinite number of warlike inventions, by which we commonly defeat the evil designs of the most powerful and dreadful Enemies; but there is no stratagem of the most Renowned General, no Fortification never so Regular and Artificial, nor Army never so victorious, that can retard but for a moment, the approaches of Death, this last Enemy. In the twinkling of an eye it flies through the strongest Bulwarks, the deepest Walls, and the most prodigious Towns. It leaps over the largest Ditches, the most prodigious Castles, and the most inaccessible Rocks. It blows down the strongest Barricadoes, and laughs at all our military Trenches, every where it finds the weakness of our Armour, and through the best temper'd Breastplates it strikes the proudest Hearts. In the darkest Dungeons it finds us out, and snatcheth us out of the hands of our most Trusty and watchful Guards. In a word, Nature and Art can furnish us with nothing that is able to protect us from Deaths cruel and insatiable hands.

There is no man so barbarous, but suffers himself to be overcome sometimes by the Prayers and Tears of such as cast themselves at his feet to implore his mercy; Nay, such as have lost all sense of Humanity and Goodness, do commonly spare in their rage the weakest Age and Sex. But unmerciful Death hath no more regard of such as humble themselves to her, as of others that resist her power. It takes no notice of Infants Tears, and Cries, it plucks them from the Breasts of their tender hearted Mothers, and crushes them in peices before their Eyes. It scorns the Lamentations of dainty Dames, and delights to trample upon their most ravishing Beauties. It stops its ears to the Requests of trembling old Age, and casts to the ground the Gray Heads, as so many withered Oaks.

At

At a Battel when Princes and Generals of the Enemies Army are taken prisoners, they are not Treated as the common Soldiers ; but unmerciful Death treads under feet as audaciously, the Subject as the Prince, the Servant and the Master, the Noble and the Vassel, the begging *Lazarus* and the rich *Abraham* together. It blows out with the same blast, the most glorious Luminaries, and the most loathsom Lamps. It hath no more respect for the Crowns of Kings, the Popes Miter, and the Cardinals Caps, than for the Shepherds Crook, or the Slaves Chains ; It heaps them all together, shuts them in the same Dungeon, and in the same Mortar it pounds them all to powder.

There is no War never so furious and bloody, but is interrupted with some days, or at least some hours of Cessation and Truce : Nay, the most inhumane minds are at last tired with their bloody Conquests, but unfatiable Death never saith it is enough : At every hour and moment it cuts down whole Nations and Kindreds ; the Flesh of all the Animals that have lived and died since the Creation of the world, hath not been able to glut this horrid Monster.

All warfare is doubtful, he that wins the Victory to day, may soon after be put to flight. He that rides at present in a Triumphant Chariot, may become the footstool of his Enemy ; but Death is always victorious, it triumphs with an insufferable insolency over all the Kings and Nations of the Earth ; it never returns to its Den but loaden with spoils and full of blood. The strongest *Sampsons* and the most victorious *Davids* who have torn in peices and overcome Lions, Bears, and cut of the Heads of Giants, have at last themselves yielded, and been cut of by Death. The Great *Alexanders*, and the Triumphant *Cæsars*, that have made all the world to tremble before them, and conquered the most part of the habitable Earth, could never find any thing that might protect them from Deaths power ;

when glorious Statues and stately Trophies were rais'd to their Honour, Death did laugh at their vanity, and make sport with their Persons. The rich Marbles, where so many proud Titles are Engraven, cover nothing but a litle rotten flesh and a few bones, which Death hath broken and reduc'd to Ashes.

We read in the Revelations of the Prophet *Daniel*, That King *Nebuchadnezar* saw in a dream a large Statue of Gold, both Glorious and Terrible; *Its Head was of pure Gold, its Breast and Arms were of Silver, its Belly and Thighs of Brass, its Legs of Iron, and its Feet were partly of Clay and partly of Iron.* As the Prince was beholding it with astonishment, a little Stone cut out of a mountain, without hands, was roll'd against the feet of this prodigious Statue, and broke it all to pieces, not only the Clay and the Iron were broken, but also the Gold, the Silver and the Brass; all became as the chaff which the wind blows to and fro: This great Image represents the four universal Monarchies of the World; That of *Babylon*, that of the *Persians* and *Medes*, that of the *Greeks*, and that of the *Romans*; It represents also the vanity and unconstancy of all things under the Sun; for what is the Pomp, the Glory, the Strength and dignities of this World, but a smoak that the wind drives before it, and a vapor that soon vanishes away? All is like a shadow that flies from us, or like a Dream that disappears in an instant: When crazy man that was created in the Image of God riseth out of the Dust; he seems to be very glorious for a while, and becomes terrible; but as soon as Death strikes at his Earthly part, and begins to break his Flesh and Bones, all the Glory, Pomp, Power, and Magnificence of the richest, of the most terrible and victorious Monarchs are chang'd into a loathsom Smell, into contemptible Dust, and reduc'd to nothing; *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

Seeing therefore that Deaths cruelty is so notable, that it spares none, and that its power is so great that none can escape or resist it ; It is no wonder if Death is become so terrible, and fills with fears, grief and despair, the minds of all Mortals who have not settled their Faith and Assurance upon God : For there is no condemned Prisoner but trembles when he beholds the Scaffold erecting, upon which he is designed to be broken upon a Wheel, or when he spies in the fire the Irons with which he is to be pincht to Death. In the midst of a sumptuous Feast, King *Belshazar* saw the fingers of a Mans hand writing these words upon his wall of the palace, *Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin*, which the Prophet *Daniel* hath thus interpreted: *Mene, God hath numbred thy Kingdom, and finished it ; Tekel, thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting ; Perez or Upharsin, Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians ;* As soon as this Great Monarch had cast his eyes upon this miraculous writing, it is said, that his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joynts of his Loyns were loosed, and his Knees smote one against another. Certainly, the profound Worldling hath a greater cause to be dismayed in the midst of his Glory and Pleasures, when he may perceive Death writing upon every wall of his House in visible Characters, and printing upon his Forehead, that *God hath numbred his days*, and this in which he now breaths, shall be soon followed by an eternal night ; That God hath weighed him in the ballance of his Justice, and found him lighter than the wind ; And that the terrible Creator, unto whom vengeance belongs, will soon divest him of all his Glory and Riches, to cloath therewith his Enemies : What comforts can be found by the wretched sinners, who do not only understand the particulars of their final sentence, but do also hear the thundring noise of the Great Judge of the world, offended at their impieties ? They may now

perceive Hell prepared to swallow them up, and the fiery Chains of that doleful prison ready to receive them; They may at present feel the hands of the executioner of Gods justice, that seizeth upon them already, and see themselves before stretcht and tortur'd in that place, where there shall be nothing but weeping, and horrible gnashing of teeth: at present they feel the fierceneis of that fire and brimstone; for it may justly be said of these wretched Varlots, *That Hell comes to them before they go to Hell*; and that in this life they are tormented with the grievous pangs of the second Death; therefore some of them in despair, do offer violence to themselves, and commit an horrid murder upon their own persons, as if they were afraid not to dye by a hand wicked enough: the expectation of Death to them, is more insufferable than Death it self, and they had rather cast themselves into the bottomless pit of Hell, than endure the apprehensions and fears of Hell in their guilty Consciences; to be delivered of the flashes of Hell-fire, that mounts up to their Souls in this life, they cast themselves in a brutish manner into that unquenchable Burning.

That which is most terrible is, that the horrid and insufferable fears that seize upon the wicked, are not only for a moment; for as a Criminal that knows that there is a sentence of Doom pronounced against him, doth continually fancy and think upon those torments that are preparing for him; as soon as he hears the door unlocking, or a Fly buzzing about his ears, he imagins that some are entring to drag him from his prison to execution; in some sence he desires what he apprehends, and hastens the approaches of that, for which he wishes, and cannot avoid. Thus desperate sinners that know there is a sentence of eternal Death pronounced against them in the Court of the King of Kings, and that from this Sentence there is no Appeal nor Escape, must needs be in continual fears. Such foresee the fearful
image

image of Death, that disturbs their quiet, and as *St. Paul* expresseth himself. *Through fear of Death they are all there life-time subject to bondage*, Heb. 2. That is, They are like so many wretched Slaves that daily tremble under the unhumane power of a merciless Tyrant.

I am not ignorant that there be some Atheists who talk of Death with contempt of scorn, and who make an open profession of braving Death without the least sence of fear ; nevertheless they feel in there Souls some secret Thorns, with which Death doth often gaul them ; some fears and apprehensions with which it tortures and disquiets them when they dream least of her. It is true, they do for the most part boast of not fearing the approaches of Death, and laugh at it when they imagine that she is at a distance from them ; but these are they who are most apt to tremble at the grim countenance of Death, and soonest to discover their weakness and despair.

If there be any that seem to laugh at Death, their laughter is only in appearance upon the Lips ; they are like a Child newly born, that seems to laugh when he is inwardly Tormented in its Bowels ; or like those that have eaten of the famous Herb, mentioned by the Herbalists, that causeth a pleasant laughter to appear upon the Lips of such, into whose noble parts it conveys a mortal poison, to bring them to an inevitable end.

There be some, I confess then, die without expressing any fear or dread of Conscience ; but these are either brutish or senseless Persons, much like unto a sleeping Drunkard, who may be cast down a Tower without any knowledg or foresight of the danger ; or they be pleasant mockers, who are like the foolish Criminals that go merrily to the Gallows ; or they be such as are full of Rage and Fury, whom I may very well compare to an enraged wild Bear, that runs himself in-

to the Huntsmans snare ; such Monsters of Men deserve not to be reckoned amongst rational and understanding Creatures.

CHAP. II.

That in all the Heathens Phylosophy, there is no solid or true Comforts against the fears and apprehensions of Death.

THere be certain Physicians that seem at the first discourse to be very well skill'd in their Art, and that talk of the Diseases, and their causes, most learnedly and accutely ; and nevertheless, in their practice they are both unhappy and ignorant : their unseasonable Learning doth disturb the Patient more than their Physick doth ease him ; they increase the sufferings of the Languishing Body, and add affliction to its pangs : These kind of Physicians do very well describe unto us, in this particular, the properties of the Heathen Philosophers ; for when they represent the calamities of our humane condition, they sharpen their wits, and discover all their Skill and Rhetorick ; some of them laugh ingeniously at our miseries, others do artificially weep to behold them ; but in all their Writings and tragick Expressions, we cannot find any solid and sincere Comforts, to strengthen us against the apprehensions of Death ; therefore their contemptible and vain fancies oblige us to tell them, as *Job* did to his friends who did disquiet instead of comforting him, *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of Clay, Job 13.* It is true, some of these Learned Philosophers have very well spoken, that we begin to dye as soon as we begin to breath, and that our Life is like unto a candle that lives by its approaches

proaches unto death, whereof the Flame doth devour and consume it; for the natural heat that entertains our life, doth insensible undermine it; for it is that which spends our radical moisture or humidity, that yeilds the same benefits unto our life, as Oyl doth to a Lamp, or Wax to a Taper.

Others have as well said, that our present life is but a swift Race from one Mother to another; they meant from the Womb of our Mothers that brought us into the World, into the womb and bosom of the Earth that will receive us at last; for as soon as we are born, we run a swift Race towards our Grave: at that instant when we fly from death, we do draw insensibly towards it, and contrary to any intention, we cast ourselves into its Bosom and Arms. Some of the same School have compared Man to a bubble upon Water, that rises and swells, and immediately decreases and breaks; others make him like to the waterish bottles of divers colours, that Children cause with their breath, and destroy with the same. In truth, all Mans Beauty is but a vain appearance that vanishes away in an instant; *Isai. 40. All flesh is like grass, and all the glory of man like the Flower of the Field,* 1 Pet. 1.

One of these great Philosophers being demanded what the life of man was, answered never a word, because such a question deserved no answer, or rather because he would imitate the custom of his Age, of speaking by guess, and symbolick representations; for that purpose he entered into a Chamber, and past out of it again at the same instant. This he did to express unto his Disciples that questioned him, how that Mans Life is but an entrance in, and egress out of the World, the one succeeds immediately the other.

Another of the same Sect walkt in a bravado two or three turns, and then shrunk into a Pit, to signify, that our Life is but a kind of Masquerade, a vain appearance that soon vanishes; when Men have well ad-

admired themselves and their Beauty, and when they have drawn the looks and esteem of the World, Death snatches them away, dashes out all their Beauty, and swallows their borrowed Glory in a mournful Grave. It is with us as with Actors in a Comedy, the one represents a King, the other an Emperor; the one a Counsellor, the other a Minister of State; but when the Comedy is ended, and the Garments changed, you know not which is which; we are like Counters upon a Table, some signify Unites, others Tens, others Hundreds, and others Thousands and Millions, but when they are gathered together, and put again into the Purse, this vast difference appears no more; This is a lively Image of all mankind, for in this life some appears upon the Throne, others are seated upon a Dunghil; some flourish in Golden and Silken attire, others are cloathed with nakedness; some Command as Princes, others submit as Gally-slaves; some are fed with exquisite Dainties, others must be content with the Bread of affliction: but when Death hath cast them all into their Graves together, then they appear equal and alike.

All these witty expressions, and others of the like nature, are pleasant and true, they teach well, and flatter the fancy, but they afford no real Comforts; Therefore to all these Learned Doctors, we may say, as *Job* by way of reproach to his friends that did add sorrow to his affliction, *You are all Physitians of no value, How then comfort ye me in vain?* Job 13. 9. and 21. 34.

When a poor Patient is stretched with the Tortures of an unmerciful Gout, or of the Stone in the Kidneys, that forceth from him at every moment, most grievous sighs and groans; If any should offer to paint before him his looks and grimness, or that should counterfeit them ingeniously in his presence, he would bring him little ease to his torments, rather an increase to his vexation and trouble: The most beautiful Flow-

er also can give no delight to such as are rackt in the Executioners hands, or tied to four Horses that are ready to tear him in pieces. Thus it is with the most eloquent and florid Discourse, it can bring no comfort to a soul that is departing. *David's* Harp alone can drive away the evil spirits, and appease the troubles of a wounded Conscience.

But some may imagine in this general survey of the wise Follies and Vanity of the Heathen Philosophers, I should except the Stoicks; I confess that in this particular they express more gravity, but they proceeded no better; nay, when I have well considered them, I find them to be far more unsufferable, and more impertinent than the rest; for besides that, they treat of the immortality of the soul, in a very doubtful and unconstant manner; the pretended comforts that they offer, do render Death more dreadful.

They tell us, that Death is the end and center where all humane Afflictions and Miseries cease; therefore it is rather to be desired, than avoided or feared. They might have some colourable reason for this conclusion, if they did but discover beyond the Grave, an happiness which they might here expect and hope for. Death assures them of no other comfort, but only to put a period to all the miseries of this wretched life. Therefore such kind of Discourses are not properly Comforts, and the resolution that they beget in us, is but a silly Passion, much like unto a Criminal upon the Rack, who impatiently longs for Death, that he might be delivered from the cruel hands of the Executioners; or who bears the inferior torments with joy, to get on the top of the Scaffold where he is to be broken upon the Wheel: Oh miserable wretch! the change of Tortures will bring no ease to thy Pains; if thou canst not endure patiently the Ropes that unjoynt thy Members, how wilt thou suffer the bar of Iron that shall crack all thy bones in peices? O blind Philosopher!

If thou canst not bear the miseries of this life, how wilt thou endure the pains and tortures of Death?

Moreover, they tell us, That the most cruel and painful Death is a noble occasion to exercise our vertue, and to cause our constancy and resolution to appear with admiration. This discourse seems to be plausible, but in reality it is nothing but wind; for what availeth this apparent virtue, because it doth not stop us from falling into the deepest Abyss of Torments and Misery, but it perisheth, and dies with its Idolaters. Therefore, such as have most admired it, have at last acknowledged its vanity; witness that famous and worthy General, who fancied, that his vertue would procure unto him the Victory over all the Enemies of the Roman Common-wealth, for whose sake he took up Arms; when the Battel was lost, and all his ambitious hopes had deceived him, being ready to stab himself with his own sword, he cryed out, *Oh miserable Vertue, what art thou but a vain and an unprofitable word, a name with out a body?* He did thus exclaim against his Vertue that he had formerly adored, because it could yeild him no comfort in the day of his distress, nor free him from falling into utter despair.

The most ordinary and usual comforts that they commoly bring, are these; That Death is inevitable; That we all enter into the world upon condition to go out; That we have as much cause to be afflicted with the day of our Birth, as with the day of our Death; That Humanity and Immortality are not constant; That Death is a Tribute we all owe to Nature; That the Kings, and greatest Monarchs are forced to pay it, as well as the meanest Subjects; and that this is such an universal Law, that it admits of no exception.

But these kind of Comforts do but increase our trouble, and add to our affliction; I have therefore good reason to speak unto these grave Philosophers *Jobs* language

language to his troublesome friends, *Miserable Comforters are ye all.* For in truth, they don't only search the wound to the quick, without any application of an healing Plaister, but they also tear and widen it, enflame and render it far more grievous; when we are in hopes of seeing an end to our calamities, our soul is comforted, and arms it self with constancy and a patient resolution; but when we see our selves cast into an Abyss of Evil, and that no hopes appear of getting out, we are then overwhelmed with grief and despair; It is a lamentable thing to be born to dye; but it is far more lamentable and grievous, to know that Death is not to be avoided, that all the Treasures of the world cannot free us from it; for his affliction is the greatest, whose misery can never be cur'd.

This also is a false and deceitful maxime, That the comfort of the miserable is to have companions in misery; although many thousand drink together of the waters of *Marah*, they seem no less bitter; and although thou shouldest be burnt in a fire where many are consumed, thou shalt not find there a milder and a more easy abode. Thy neighbours Grief doth not lessen thy Affliction; their Sicknes cannot restore to thee Health; and their Death comfort thee against the approaches of thine own. On the contrary, if thou hast any sense of Humanity, thou wilt weep for their Misery and thine together: It is that which great *Xerxes*, King of *Persia*, did practice; for when he took a view of his numerous Army, in which there were 1100000 Men, and considered, that within one hundred years, so many brave Captains and Soldiers would be rotting in their Grave, he was moved with compassion and wept. I do not mention here the brutish and foolish opinion of such, as imagine that Mans Soul is mortal, and dies with our Bodies. This consideration brings no comfort, but casts us into an irrecoverable despair; for after the torments of Hell fire, there is nothing that can be

be imagined more dreadful, than a reducement to nothing.

It is needless also to mention the Philosophers that are Disciples of *Plato*, who have discoursed of the Souls Immutability, and of its Blessedness after this life: they imagine themselves very accute and subtile, but their discourses of this matter, are so gross and extravagant, that instead of perswading the Truth, they express it to scorn and contempt. Let their fond and imaginary descriptions of the *Elysian* Fields, be witnesses, for whatsoever they have invented of this kind, hath been placed amongst the Fables and poetical Fictions. Those Chymical Gardens under ground, contain nothing like to the Divine Excellencies and unspeakable pleasures of the Paradise of God.

In one word, seek amongst the rarest and most precious Treasuries of Wit and Learning belonging to the Heathen Antiquity, turn over the Writings of the most Eloquent Orators, of the subtilest Philosophers, of the most famous Poets; examine the Secrets of the most expert and experienced Physitians, consider their Practice, and all the Remedies that they prescribe to the Soul, and you shall find them too unskilful to perform the least Cure; They do but charm and divert the Disease, hardens us against evil; they furnish us with a good exterior, and teach us to bear a good Meen, but they have no real antidote against the Venome that kills the Principle of Life, nor Remedy that reaches to the Heart. And as the Torrents that dry up in the hottest seasons, such Consolations that flow not from the Fountain of Life, vanish away without effect, and dry up to nothing, when a deep sorrow, fear, and affliction, seize upon a sinful Soul.

It seems, the contrivers of the Heathens Religion, were sensible of this Truth; for they have dedicated Temples, and erected Alters to all manner of gods and goddesses; not only to Vertues and Health, but also

also to Vices and Diseases, to Fear, Cowardise, Anger, and Feavour, the Pestilence, and an infinite more, but they left Death out of their Devotions. This is an open Declaration, that they knew not how to strike acquaintance with Death, and win its esteem and favour. They had no Sacrifices nor Incense that could allay its fury; they lookt upon it as their most inhumane and unreconcilable Enemy. The very name of Death did terrify them, therefore it was own of their most unfortunate Omens. *Adrian* the Emperor is a witness of what I say; he was one of the greatest Princes in former Ages, he had made most part of the habitable World tremble under his Scepter, and put to death an infinite number of Men; but at last he trembled, and was astonished himself at the approaches of Death: he had overcome the most barbarous Nations, and tam'd the most savage Beasts; but when he came to this last Enemy, he had no weapons fit for the Encounter: therefore in this occasion he discovers the weakness and unconstancy of his Mind, far more disturb'd than his Body was with the Disease. Sometimes he did imploy the Magick Art to retard Death; sometimes he did make use of his Sword and Poison to hasten it; at last he kill'd himself by an abstinence from Food, necessary to entertain his life. He had conquer'd all the World, and given Peace and Happiness to his Empire; but he could not overcome himself, or appease the troubles of his Conscience: he was so far from satisfying the troublesome thoughts of his Soul, that he suffers himself to be overwhelmed with despair, he flatters his Soul in hastening its ruine, for when his Disease did suffer him to breath, he talkt unto it in this manner; *My little Soul, my dearest Companion, Thou art now going to wander in obscure, cold and strange places; Thou shalt never jest again according to the wonted custom; thou shalt never give me any sport or pleasure any more.*

But

But some may say, that *Adrian* was a powerful Monarch, but no great Philosopher; that he knew how to Govern, and was well acquainted with the Politicks; but that he was ignorant of the Morals, and had no skill to dye well. To answer this Objection, let us give an example of one without exception, who will satisfy all Opponents.

Aristotle is generally esteem'd to have been the Subtlest, and the most Learned of the Heathen Antiquity, he was the Prince of all the Philosophers, the Glory of his Age, and the Founder of his Sect; when his excellent Soul had view'd all things, examined the Heavens, searcht among the excellencies of the Earth, pryed into all the Wonders of the World, and found out the rarest Secrets of Nature; He could never find any solid Comforts against the apprehensions of Death. Notwithstanding all his admirable Subtelties, and his profound Learning, the fear of this cruel Death terrifies his Conscience in such a manner, that he confessed, *That of all terrible things, Death was the most dreadful.*

CHAP. III.

Of divers sorts of Death, with which we must encounter.

When *David* had a design to fight with *Goliath*, he could not make use of the Armor of King *Saul*, therefore he took a smooth stone out of his Bag, cast it with his Sling, struck the *Philistine* in the Forehead, and brought down this proud Giant who had defied the Armies of *Israel*. We have already examined and tried all the Armor of humane Wisdom and Learning, laid up in the Storehouses of the

the greatest wits of former Ages, and we have found that they are not able to yield us any benefit, when we shall encounter with Death. Let us therefore now see whither we may overcome this Proud Enemy, with the Sling of our mystical *David*, with the weapons of our Divine Shepherd; but before we begin the Encounter, let us look and behold it in the face. The enemy that I intend that you should overcome, is a Monster with three Heads, for there are three sorts of death, the Corporal, the Spiritual, and the Eternal.

The Corporal Death is a separation of the Soul from the Body; although our Body hath been fashioned with the Finger of God, it is but a weak and frail Vessel made with the slime of the Earth; but our Soul is of an Heavenly, Spiritual, and Immortal Substance; it is a Sparkle and a Ray of the Godhead, and the lively Image of our great Creator; for when God had made our first Parent, *He breathed into his Nostrils the breath of Life*, Gen. 2. 7. that we might thereby understand, that our Souls do proceed from his immediate hand, therefore he is named the *Father of spirits*, Heb. 12. and *The faithful Creator of Souls*, 1 Pet. 4. This Soul doth raise us a degree above all the Animals, and above the Celestial Bodies, and renders us like to the Angels of Heaven: It is the Light that enlightens us, the Salt that preserves us from Corruption; In one word, by this Soul we live, enjoy our Sences, move, and understand; as soon as this Angelical Guest leaves its Lodging and Earthly abode, it loseth all Beauty, and falls of it self into an inevitable ruine: For this Flesh that we entertain with care, and pamper with all manner of Dainties, doth then corrupt and rot; after that it hath been stretcht a while upon Beds of Gold, and richly attired in Purple and Scarlet, it is cast upon a bed of worms, and covered with the vilest insects of the Earth; notwithstanding all its former perfumes, yields then a most horrid stink; before it

did ravish the eyes of the Beholders with its admirable Beauty, but now it becomes so odious and horrible, that the living care not to see it; at last it is reduced to ashes, according to the Sentence that was pronounced in the Earthly Paradise, *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return.* The Spiritual Death is the separation of the Soul from God our Creator; for he being the Soul of our Souls, and the Light of our Life, as soon as we depart from this source of Light and Life, we fall into an Abyss of Darkness and Death; *For all those that depart from God shall perish* Psal. 73. As the Members when they are cut off from the Body, do commonly rot, and as the twig withers when it is separated from the Vine, so in a separation from God, we can neither live, move, nor have a being; and as it is with the Body separated from the Soul, it nourisheth a nest of Worms that devour it, and sends forth a most insufferable stench: so it is with our Soul, when it is at a distance from God, it brings forth a multitude of evil affections that torment and consume it, and the ill scent of its crimes are odious to Heaven and Earth; of this kind of Death our Saviour speaks to the Jews in this manner; *If you do not believe that I am he, you shall dye in your sins,* John 8. And to the Angel of the Church of Sardis, *Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead,* Rev. 3. This same Death St. Paul mentions in the 2 Chap. of the Coloss. and 2 of the Ephes. *When you were dead in your trespasses and sins, God hath quickened us together with Christ.* And elsewhere he exorts a sinful man, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee Light,* Eph. 5. And it is of the same kind of Death that St. Paul speaks of concerning the Lecherous Widow, that *She is dead while she liveth,* 1 Tim. 5.

It was this kind of Death that Adam suffered as soon as he had tasted of the forbidden Fruit, according to Gods threatening; *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou*

thou shalt dye the death : For not only his body became subject to Death and Corruption, but his Soul also was cast into the Death of Sin, and enslaved to corruption. It happened to him as to a Lamp newly put out, the snuff yields a most ill-favour'd scent.

As the life of Grace is a preparation to the life of Glory, as it furnisheth us with a fore-tast of the Heavenly joys ; so on the contrary, the Spiritual Life is as it were the Suburbs of Hell ; it is the first beginning of an Eternal death, and the mouth of the infernal pit. The Eternal Death is nothing else but an entire and irrecoverable separation of the Soul and Body from God, accompanied with infinite Torments ; Torments indeed, unto which all the sufferings of this mortal life are but light and inconsiderable scratches ; nevertheless, as the spirit of God doth represent the Heavenly joys and felicities by the things that are most pleasant and delightful ; thus to express unto us Hells Torments, it borrows the things that are the most dreadful and painful in this life. We are told of an *Abyss*, or *Furnace full of flames*, a *bottomless pit burning with fire and brimstone*. The Scripture mentions, *Chains of darkness*, an *Eternal night*, and an *Hell fire*, where there are *weeping and knashing of Teeth* ; it tells us that *Tophet is ordained of old*, yea for the King it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a stream of Brimstone doth kindle it, *Isai. 30. 33.*

Fancy to your selves a Man devoured with Worms, burning in hot Flames, who is broken and Tortured continually, in whose wounds kindled brimstone is poured without intermission, with boyling Lead and burning Pitch, and if there be any other Torment more grievous and horrid, fancy it also ; All this will give us but a light and an imperfect image of Hell torments, for all the pangs of the Body are nothing in comparison

son to the horrors, troubles, and incredible griefs that shall, for ever, rack and torture the damned Souls in Hell.

As shame doth aggravate our sufferings, and render them more terrible; the damned shall be loaden with Shame and Infamy for all Eternity, their names shall be hateful to God and his Holy Angels, and they shall be cursed with an endless Curse. And as it is an increase to our Torment to suffer in the company of abominable Varlets, and to become a companion of the most infamous Executioner; they shall suffer with Hells executioner, and shall be sent to the fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels: All there senses shall share in these horrid Torments, they shall be crusht in the *Wine-press* of Gods Eternal wrath, and they shall feel for ever and ever, the strokes of Gods vengeance, and of his Almighty hand; They shall then learn by experience what a terrible thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, and how unsufferable that fire is that shall consume his Enemies; their Eyes shall perceive nothing but the bottomless pit, the Devils Image, and the Furies of Hell: their Ears shall hear nothing but the horrible outcries and fearful roarings of the Tormented Devils, and damn'd souls. They shall be choakt with the noisome smell and fumes of the bottomless pit; they shall then drink the very dregs and the bottom of Gods anger and indignation, and they shall suck the venom of his Arrows, *Fire and Brimstone shall be the portion of their Cup.* Psal. 11.

The sufferings of this life are but short, and for a moment, but the Torments of the damned shall never end; *Their Worm dieth not, and their fire shall never be quenched,* Mark 9. Revel. 20. They shall be tormented day and night for all Eternity; when they shall have suffered as many thousand Ages as there be drops of water in the Sea, or grains of Sand on the shore; it shall be

be but the beginning of their grief ; they shall live for ever to dye continually, and they shall dye and never be consum'd ; in the midst of those hot flames, they shall beg a drop of water to cool their tongue, *Luk. 16.* but we may say of this Fire that shall torture the damned, what the Spouse in the *Canticles* saith of the Divine love that had enflamed her Soul, *Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it, Cant. 8.* And *St. Paul* tels us, that *the things that God hath prepared for them that love him ; eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the heart of man, 1. Cor. 2.* So on the contrary we may say, that those things that God hath prepared for them that hate him, *Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, nor did never enter into the Heart of man.* From thence shall proceed their Rage, Madnes and despair ; they shall cry in *Cains* Language, *My punishment is greater than I can bear, Gen. 4.* when they shall see nothing but an extream misery, and woful darkness, they will curse God the King of all Creatures, *Isa. 8.* In there fury and rage they will eat their Tongues, and blaspheme the great God of Heaven and Earth. It had been far better for such persons, that they had never been born, therefore they shall seek death and shall not find it, *Mat. 26.* They shall desire to dye, that is to be reduc'd to nothing, *Revel. 9.* but this Death shall fly from them ; Who of you *can dwell in everlasting burning ? Isa. 33.* who of us can dwell in Eternal Flames ? *Revel. 6.* If the viols, and little cups full of Gods wrath, do force the wicked to cry out, how much more shall the Rivers and the Ocean of Gods vengeance force from them ? *O mountains fall upon us, O rocks cover us, and hide us from the face of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the day of his anger is come, and who may abide it ? Prov. 1.* But as they have stopt their ears to Gods gracious calls, and hardened their hearts to his invitations to repentance, then God shall also stop his ears to their outcries, and

his eyes to their horrid sufferings, and when they shall be overwhelmed with fear and despair, God will scorn and mock at their insufferable misery.

CHAP. IV.

That Jesus Christ our Lord hath redeemed us from Eternal Death, and by degrees doth deliver us from a Spiritual Death.

WE read in the fifth Chapter of the Revelation of *St. John*, That this beloved Disciple wept bitterly, because no being in Heaven and Earth, nor under the Earth, was able to open the Book sealed with seven Seals, that was in Gods right hand ; at that instant, one of the 24 Elders spake to him, *Weep not, behold the Lion of the Tribe of Juda hath overcome to open the Book and to loose the seven Seals.* Thus we have until now wept bitterly, because we could find no body in the Armies of *Israel*, to encounter with that horrid Monster Death. But let us also wipe our Tears, and take good courage my beloved, for this same Lion of the Tribe of *Juda* hath order to fight with this dreadful Enemy, our victorious and triumphing *David*, who hath torn in pieces the infernal Lion, bruised the antient Serpents Head, and spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing of them in his Cross, Col. 2. 15. It is he that hath undertaken this glorious combat ; It was for that purpose that he left for a while the Throne of God the Father, and the company of his Holy Angels ; 1 Sam. 17. It was for that intent that he came into the Camp, and confusion of *Israel*, contemning the shame and reproaches of his brethren. He hath not borrowed the weapons and assistance of the world, Heb. 2. all that he hath taken from us, is our frail nature. But he, hath armed himself with
righte-

righteousness, as with a breast-plate, and hath put on the Helmet of salvation. He hath clothed himself with vengeance as with a garment, and hath covered himself with jealousy as with a cloak, he hath alone troden the Wine-press, and no body hath assisted him; Isa. 59. Isa. 63. but his arm hath saved him, and his hand hath upheld him. As David cut off Goliaths Head with his own sword, Jesus Christ hath overcome Death by Death; like unto the powerful Sampson, he hath destroyed all the Enemies of his Glory by his Death, 1 Sam. 17. He hath overcome in dying, him who had the Empire of Death, that is the Devil, Heb. 2. and hath delivered them, who through fear of Death, were all their life time subject to bondage, then was fulfilled this proof out of Hosea. O Death I will be thy plague, O grave I will be thy destruction, Hof. 13. and that of Isaiah, He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the Earth. Isai. 25. 1 Tim. 6. This blessed Prince, Kings of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, and dwelleth in an inaccessible light, hath destroyed Death, and brought to light life and immortality by the Gospel, 1 Tim. 1. O Death where is thy victory! O grave where is thy sting? The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law; but blessed be God who hath given us the victory by our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15.

This great God and Saviour hath perfectly redeemed us from Eternal Death, as he himself doth teach us in the Gospel of St. John, He that beareth my word, and beleiveth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from Death unto life, chap. 5. 24. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven, if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. Chap. 6. 51. v. 40. Your fathers did eat Manna in the wilderness and are Dead, This is the bread which cometh down from Heaven, that

a man may eat thereof and not dye, Chap. 8. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If any man keep my word, he shall never taste of death. I am the resurrection and the life, he that lives and believeth in me shall never dye, and he that believeth in me although he were dead, yet shall he live, Chap. 11. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ: Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, Revel. 20. The second death shall never have any power upon him. In one word, the Gates of Hell, that is to say, Death, can do no prejudice to them that are built upon Jesus Christ the rock of Eternity. This merciful Saviour hath also delivered us from the spiritual death, Eph. 2. For we being dead in our trespasses and sins, he hath quickned us, and raised us up together unto newness of life, Colos. 2. He hath carried our sins in his body upon the Cross, that he dying unto sin, we might live unto righteousness. We are buried with him in his death by Baptisme, that as Jesus Christ is raised from the dead by the Glory of God the Father, we also likewise should walk in newness of life, 1 Pet. 2. Awake thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Jesus Christ shall enlighten thee, Rom. 6. For by his death, he hath not only reconciled us to God the Father, Eph. 5. Colos. 11. but he hath also procured unto us the Holy Spirit, that creates in us a new heart, and imprints the image of his holiness, Ezek. 36. 2 Cor. 5. He makes us become new creatures, and regenerates us by the uncorruptible seed, 1 Pet. 1. This is that which the Scripture names the first resurrection, Revel. 20. St. Peter was ravisht in admiration at this great and wonderful benefit, and therefore he acknowledgeth it. Blessed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1 Pet. 1. God discover'd to the Prophet Ezekiel a field cover'd with dry bones, and commanded him to
prophecy

prophecy upon those bones, *Ezek. 37*. At the Prophets Command they began to draw near one another, then the Nerves began to appear, the Flesh to grow and to be covered with skin, but there was no life until God Commanded the Prophet to prophecy again, *Thus saith the Lord, Spirit, come from the four winds, blow upon these dead bodies, and let them rise from the dead*. Then the Spirit entred into them, they began to revive, and they stood upon their Legs. This is the lively and true image of the first resurrection; for the Spirit of God that blows whither it listeth, doth regenerate us by degrees, *John 3*. and the new man is created in our hearts, by little and little, as the Child grows in its Mothers Womb.

When *Joshua* brought the Children of *Israel* into the Land of Promise, he did not destroy all the Canaanites, *Josh. 23*. there remained some who became Scourges in their sides, and Thorns in their Eyes. Thus our true and Spiritual *Joshua*, who hath led us into the Kingdom of his Grace, hath not altogether destroyed all our evil affections; some yet remains that are like prickles in our sides, and like swords that pierce through our souls; They do yet render our life bitter and unpleasant, and therefore we often desire death to come and put a period to this combat. Sin was in possession of us, as a strong man armed in an House, but Jesus Christ is entred into our Souls, and become the Master; He hath therefore bound and chained sin, and hath nailed it to his Cross: But this furious Beast, although it hath received a mortal wound, and is ready to give up the last gasp, it struggles and fumes within us; our blessed Saviour hath extinguished with the Red Stream of his Blood, the infernal flames of all our cursed affections; but yet there remains in the ashes some sparkles of this devilish fire, that do cause in us some furious fits. This only merciful Redeemer of his infinite mercy, hath loosed us
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from the Devils Chains, but that we might have cause to be humbled, to desire the increase of his Grace, and to long for the advent of his Glory, he leaves about us some of the troublesom Fetters; by his Holy Spirit he files them off by degrees, but one day he will take them away from us. He doth now receive us as his beloved Children, into the Celestial Kingdom of his Grace, *Job* 11. nevertheless, he suffers in us some ill-favoured reliques of sin and corruption.

At the voice of this Prince of Life, that reaches to the very bottom of our hearts, we are risen from the sepulchre of our Vices with our Grave-Cloaths about us, as *Lazarus*, when he came out of his Tomb; we are like the antient Slaves that were set at Liberty, we bear upon our Forehead the visible marks of our antient slavery; but one day our Lord Jesus Christ shall cover these marks of infamy and disgrace with an heavenly Diadem. If you desire another image of a spiritual condition, fancy to your selves a dead man cast into a foul Pit or Sink, unto whom life is restord in a moment; afterwards by degrees he is wash'd and clean'd of the filth that covers his body. We were not only dead of a Spiritual death, but we were also overwhelmed in an Abyss of corruption and filth. The Son of God hath pull'd us out of this Abyss, and hath already restored unto us life; but the dirt and putrefaction with which we were disfigured, he washes it away by the waters of his Grace, *Zac.* 13. *For there is a fountain opened for sin in the House of David*, *Isai.* 4. in the which God hath promised to wash away all the filth of the Daughter of *Sion*, and all the blood of *Jerusalem*; and as it happened to the cruel King *Adonibezech*, when the Tribe of *Juda* took him prisoner, he lost the Thumbs of his Hands, and the great Toes of his Feet, but he did not suffer death until he was come to *Jerusalem*; Thus our great God and Saviour, the Prince of the Tribe of *Juda*, hath cut off the strength and power

er of the old man that did tyrannize in our souls, and hath deprived him of his venomous nails with which he did wound our hearts; he hath also given him his mortal wound, but he suffers him to enjoy a languishing life, and will not take away his last breath, until we bring him to the Gates of the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

But to speak more openly, sin is yet in us, but he doth not Reign, for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath broken its Scepter and hath pull'd him from his Throne; and as he hath taken from it all Command in us, he constrains it to leave the possession of our souls by degrees. As a strong and mighty King, who having won the Battel, pursues and drives his Enemy, until he hath totally exposed him out of his kingdom; so doth our Saviour deal with sin.

And as it happens with a Woman with Child in her old age, there is in her Body two contrary lives, that of the Mother, and that of the Child; the one decays and dies insensibly, the other, that is, the Childs life, grows and increaseth by degrees: So it is in the faithful and regenerate Soul; There are two lives, that of Sin that the Scripture names the Old man, and that of the New man, which is created according to God in Righteousness, and true Holiness; the one diminishes, and approacheth to its final end, but the other grows and gathers strength until we arrive to the perfect stature of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Spirit of God every day gets ground of our corruption and darkness. As it happens with the Rivers of fresh water, that encroach upon the Earth, they undermine the nearest Banks; or as the Sun when he riseth upon our Horizon, he drives before him all shadows, until the Air be perfectly enlightneed; so it is with the Grace of our God in our Souls.

C H A P. V.

Why we are yet subject to the Corporal or Natural Death, and what advantage we do thereby receive in Jesus Christ.

THE wise King teacheth us in the 9th of Ecclesiastes, *That the same accident happens to all, to the righteous and to the wicked, and to the clean, and to the polluted, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not.* These words are to be understood of the several afflictions unto which we are exposed during this mortal life; but we may apply it to the Natural Death, for it is appointed unto all once to dye, and after that the judgment follows, Heb. 9. By one man sin is entred into the World, and by Sin Death, and thus Death is come upon all men, because they have all sinned, Rom. 5. Therefore when Joshua felt himself feeble and decaying, he told the Children of Israel, *That he was going the way of all flesh,* Josh. 23. and Job complains unto God, *I know that thou wilt reduce me to death, and to the house appointed for all living,* Job 30. It was upon this subject that the Royal Prophet was exercising his Meditation, when he cryed out, *Who is he that liveth and shall not see death, shall he free his soul from the power of the Grave?* Eccles. 12. And to speak in the language of Solomon, or ever the Silver Cord be loosed, or the Golden Bowl be broken, or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the Wheel broken at the Cistern: That is to say, The Back-bone, whereof the Marrow is as white as Silver, be unloosed; when the Scull, which is like a precious vessel of Gold, be broken; when the Vena Cava receives no more Blood from the Liver, the fountain of Life; when the Lights that draw in and push forth the breath, move no more; or when the Kidneys that extract the humidity from the Veins, and cause it

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to drop down into the Bladder, as into a Cistern, begin to fail, *Then shall the Body return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*

To express unto us this inevitable fate, *Moses* reckons up all the antient Fathers that have lived longest in the first world; he mentions some who lived 700, others 800, others 900 years, and some near a thousand, *Gen. 5.* But when he hath well spoken of their deeds, and of the Children which they left in the world; he adds in the conclusion of all, And then such an one died; So that our Creator doth execute upon all men, the Sentence once pronounced against *Adam*, the Father of all Mankind; *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return, Gen. 3.*

By this means God declares his Justice and Truth, and accomplisheth what was signified by the antient Types, *Levit. 14.* For according to the Laws which God gave to *Israel* by *Moses*, the house that was infected with the Leper, was to be demolished and cast into a noisome place; There was a far more important reason for mans body to be destroyed, and laid in the Sepulchre, because he was created to be the Palace of the living God, the Dwelling of his Glory; But Sin that is a kind of infectious Leper, hath insinuated it self, and disfigured it; it hath entred the Skin, corrupted the Blood, disordered the Spirits; it is crept into the Joynts and Marrow, and hath spread its venom in such a manner, that there is none of our Members, but is an instrument of iniquity and unrighteousness, *Rom. 6.*

For the same reason, we cannot sufficiently admire the difference that God had put between the Vessels that were clean, and such as were unclean; for he commanded, that the earthen Vessel that was infected should be broken to pieces, *Levit. 11.* but that such as were of a more precious substance, should be only washed with water and purified with fire, *Numb. 11.* The Commands and Laws of the great God, are excellent

cellent Commentaries upon his actions; our Soul is like a Golden Vessel, because it is of a Spiritual and Heavenly substance; therefore God doth not altogether destroy it, although it be infected with sin, but causeth it to be washed and cleansed at the fountain of his infinite mercy; he purifies it with the blood of his Son, and causes it to pass through the fire of his Holy Spirit; but for this miserable Body, that is but an earthly Vessel and Tabernacle, he doth break it to pieces, and reduce it to dust and ashes. It is my judgement, that death is an excellent means to demonstrate the infinite power of our great God and Saviour; for the greater the disease is, the more admirable is the Cure; without doubt the finger of God, and his infinite power, is far more visible in raising one man from the dead, than in preserving many thousands alive.

As God is wont to draw light out of darkness, so he makes use of death to cause his infinite wisdom to shine and appear to all his Creatures. Sin hath brought forth death, and death on the contrary, but a most fortunate paricide, kills and destroys its Parent Sin, for it is death that totally roots out of our Souls all corrupt affections.

Moreover, God, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb. 13.* will have all his Children pass through the same path, to take possession of his eternal Inheritance, and enter by the same Gate into his Royal Palace; All the faithful of the Old Testament are gone already this way, *through many tribulations*, *Acts 24.* they are arrived to the Kingdom of God, and through death they are come to the abode of life and immortality. The Holy Scriptures that are inspired of God tell us, That the *Reubenites, and half of the Tribe of Manasseh*, *Numb. 32.* *Josh. 1.* left their dwellings which they had beyond *Jordan*, to go over and fight in the Army of *Israel*, and that they did not offer to return, until God had given rest to their brethren, and put them
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into a peaceable possession of their inheritances; If I may make some stop, at such an excellent Allegory, I may say that these passages represent unto us a lively image of the faithful that dye before the end of the world; for they leave their bodies, the abode and dwellings of their souls, and they pass through death, as through another *Jordan* into the Celestial *Canaan*, to encounter with God by their Prayers, in the society of the first-born, whose names are reigstred in Heaven, and they will not return to the bodies, that they have quitted, until the number of the Saints be compleat, until the building of the Church be finished, and until our great *Joshua* hath introduced us into his Eternal Rest, and put us in possession of the incorruptible inheritance reserved for us in Heaven; Then we shall not need to fight, but to enjoy peaceably the fruits of our victories, and to rest for ever from all our labours. We shall have no cause to offer unto God Prayers and Supplications, but our business shall be to sing unto him Praises and eternal Thanksgivings.

The strongest and the most considerable Reason in my judgment, of this our destiny is, That God hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren; he will have us baptized with his Baptisme, that we drink in his Cup, and that we enter into Bliss by that same Gate, through which he hath already past: through Shame and Disgrace he is arriven to Glory, and through Death he is ascended into Life; he hath drunk of the bitter waters, before that he hath tasted of the River of Celestial Joys, and he is gone down into the Grave before he would mount up to the right hand of God.

Although it is appointed unto all men once to dye, *Heb. 9.* I dare maintain that death hath no cause to boast it self, and that it cannot sing Songs of Triumph with any Reason, because that it loseth the most glorious and happiest Victory; for we read in the Book of *Esther*,
that

that King *Abasuerus* would not abolish nor recall the Proclamation that he had set forth against the Jews, but that he gave them full liberty to take up Arms to defend themselves, to attack their Enemies, and to make them suffer all the evils that they intended against them: I find something like unto this proceeding, for God would not call back the sentence of Death that he had pronounced against Mankind, in the Garden of *Eden*; nevertheless he allows us, nay, he commands his true *Israel* to take up Arms against Death, to conquer and trample it under feet.

In the first place, Jesus Christ, who is our head, hath encountered with Death, and conquered it, he hath pursued it into its Trenches, and overcome it in its own Fortification; Death thought to have devoured him, but it hath been devoured it self; as the Fishes are taken by the Hook that they think to swallow; and as the Bees do hurt those whom they sting, and do greater harm to themselves; for they cause but a present pain in our body, and a heat that soon ceaseth; but it causeth to it self greater damage, for it breaks its sting and loseth thereby its life. Thus Death, by fixing its sting in the Humanity of Jesus Christ, hath put him to a great deal of pain for a time, but it hath thereby lost all strength, vigor, and sting, by this means.

The men of *Juda*, to satisfy the furious Philistins, delivered into their hands *Sampson*, bound with Ropes. When they saw him, the Philistins gave several joyful shouts, but the Spirit of God came upon him in such a manner, that he tore in pieces the two Ropes where-with he was bound, and overcame them by whom he was led away prisoner, and kill'd a thousand of them. Thus the miserable Jews for fear of the Romans, deliver'd unto them our Lord Jesus Christ, their Brother according to the flesh, bound like a Malefactor: when Hell saw him nailed to the Cross; and afterwards laid in a Grave, it did wonderfully rejoyce the Devil and
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his Angels began to sing Songs of Triumph. But it was altogether unpossible, that the Prince of Life should be detained in the Prisons of Death ; he hath not only broken out of the Grave by his infinite power, but he hath also trampled under feet all his most furious enemies, and overcame millions of infernal Fiends; and to declare how Life and Death were in his power, he hath Commanded Death, when he was, as it were a prisoner, shut up in its Dungeon. He hath broke open the Gates of this black prison, and torn in pieces all its Fetters ; for when he was yet in his Grave, he raised to life many that were dead, who were seen in the Holy City ; and yet at present he holds in his hand the keys of Death and of Hell : Therefore, as Children do rejoyce at their Fathers Victory ; and as the Subjects are concerned at the prosperous proceedings of their King ; and as the Members are the better for the Glory and Honour of their Head ; thus we may justly glory in the most notable victories, and famous Triumphs of Jesus Christ, who is our Father, King, and Head ; we may also justly glory, that we are Lords of Death, and that we have overcome it in the person of our Great God and Saviour ; I say this after the Apostle *St. Paul*, That God hath quickened us together, and raised us together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places with Jesus Christ, *Eph. 2.*

Moreover, as our Saviour hath once overcome Death for us, he continnes to overcome it in and by us ; he doth not suffer us to encounter with our enemies alone, nor doth he leave us in time of need ; but as in a day of Battel, a wise and provident General hath an eye in every place, and encourages by his action and voice, his Soldiers whom he perceives at hand ; blows with the Enemy ; some he loads with praises, others with promises ; by that means he encourageth such as behave themselves bravely ; rescues the weak and feeble, and to such as are over-born, he furnishes

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them with fresh Supplies? Thus deals with us our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the great God of Hosts, who sits above in the Heavens in his triumphal Chariot, and beholds all our combats and encounters; when he perceives us too weak, that we might not be overcome by our most dreadful Enemies, he furnisheth us with his Holy Spirit, and his own Armor, as *Jonathan* did to *David*, when he deliver'd to him his Cloak, his Bow, his Belt and Sword; besides this merciful Saviour disarms Death of its most hurtful weapons, and takes away all its Arrows and Darts.

As the strength and power of *Sampson* did lodg in the hair of his head, which the Philistines could never have imagined; so the strength and power of Death consists in such things as the world do least dream of. The most dreadful weapons with which it terrifies and beats us, are the Thunderbolts and Curses of the Law; and our sins are as the poison in which it dips its Arrows; or rather, our sins are the fiery Darts with which it wounds and destroys us. Now Jesus Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, when he became a Curse for us, Gal. 3. He hath carried our sins in his Body upon the Cross, 1 Pet. 2. And as the He-Goat *Hazel*, he hath transported them away into an inhabitable Desert, Levit. 16. He hath removed them from the eyes of our God, as far as the East is from the West; he hath cast them into the bottom of the Ocean, and drown'd them in his Blood; so that we now see fulfilled, what was foretold by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, The iniquity of *Israel* shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of *Juda*, and they shall not be found, chap. 50.

Therefore being invested with the Grace of God, and armed with the Vertue of his Holy Spirit, Let us shew our courage and despise death; let us look it in the face without fear, laugh at all its threats, and encounter with it without dread, for it is now but like
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a Soldier, who without his weapons carries himself proudly; it is like a Bee that buzzeth about without its sting; it is like an old Lion that roars, but hath lost all his Claws; it is like a Snake that would cast its poyson, but hath no venomous Teeth left, because they have been all pull'd out by him who hath bruised the Serpents Head.

If you consider nothing but Deaths Exterior, its Face, and fearful appearance, its frightful Eyes, its meager Body, its Iron'd Hands; you cannot perceive any difference between the Death of Gods Children, and that of the most wicked varlets; but if you lift up the vizard and examine the Death of the one, and of the other, more Exactly, you will meet with as much difference, as between Heaven and Earth, the Paradise of God and Hell; for as *Moses's* brazen Serpent, which he lift up in the desert, had the form and appearance of a burning Serpent, but nothing of the Prison and Fire, thus the death of the faithful appears, as the death of other men, but hath not the deadly and pernicious consequences; for it is not only a sign and a testimony of Gods Grace and Favour, but the beginning of our deliverance, and the cure of all our Diseases; As *Moses*, when he had cast wood into the waters of *Marah*, they had the same Colour, but not the same bitterness and unpleasant tast: Thus the death of Gods dearest Children hath the same tincture and appearance as before, but Christs Cross hath taken away the danger, the trouble, and extracted out of it its unsufferable bitterness, and changed it into unspeakable sweetness. As *Pharaoh* was drowned, with all his Army, in the waters of the *Red-Sea*; but the Children of *Israel* found a secure and a pleasant passage into the promised Land; When they were arrived upon the other shoar of that dreadful Sea, they sung unto God Songs of Triumph and Thanksgiving; Thus Death opens its Throat to devour the Reprobates; It is an Abyss where they can find no bot-

tom, but unto the Children of God, it is a favourable passage into an eternal Bliss; as soon as they are gone through, they are arrived to a place of Assurance, Joy, and Rest, where God furnisheth them with Songs of Triumph and Thanksgiving to the Lamb, 1 *Rev.* 15.

Moses's Rod was turned into a Serpent, but *Aaron's* being laid up in the Tabernacle, began to flourish and bear Almonds, *Exod.* 4. and 7. Thus while we are in the hands of the Law, Death is dreadful and terrible; but when we draw near to Christ the true Ark of the Covenant, it blossoms and brings Fruits forth, of Joy and Eternal Comfort.

Balaam the Prophet was called to curse the People of God, but he blessed it, contrary to the vain expectation of *Balak*, King of *Moab*. Thus Death hath been brought into the world by the Devil, to destroy, and utterly abolish the Holy seed; but God by his infinite Goodness and Wisdom, hath changed it into Salvation and Blessing; Let us not therefore be any longer puzzled to find out the meaning of *Sampsons* Riddle, *Out of the eater came forth Meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness*, *Judg.* 14. For the Church of God unto whom Christ hath discover'd the most excellent Secrets of his Kingdom, teacheth us to seek the Honey, the sweetest comforts, out of the Belly of this old Lion.

It is not possible to Judge of Musick by a Tone, or of an Oration by a Period, nor of a Comedy by a Scene. So we must not judge of a Battel by the first Assault, nor of a wrestling by the first embraces and effects of the wrestlers; for some in the beginning of the Battel turn their backs, who nevertheless at the last, do sometimes win the day and the victory; and some in wrestling are foiled at the beginning, who nevertheless at last supplant their Enemy, and cast him upon the back; Therefore that we may better understand the great and notable advantages that we have over death,

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we must examine it all along, until the end of the encounter; we must take notice of every Assault that we do give unto this unreconcilable Enemy.

Assoon as the Taper of our Life begins to burn, Satan sends forth his blasts to extinguish it: Death labours to undermine this poor Dwelling, from the first moment that it was built, besieges it on all sides; it makes its approaches, in time it saps the foundation, it batters us with several diseases and unexpected accidents, every day it opens a breach, and pulls out of this building some stones: But if Death labours to Demolish on her part, we on ours labour to repair; And as those who built the wall of *Jerusalem*, held with one hand the Trowel, and with the other a Sword to fight; so we defend our selves as well as we are able, against the assaults of Death: Therefore we do not only endeavour to preserve this earthly Lodge that God hath Lett and Set to us for a term, and to mend up the continual Dilapidations that happen in it; but at the very sight of death, when it gives us the Assault, we do then also advance our Spiritual building, and labour to bring it to perfection; so that we may say as the Apostle *St. Paul*, *If our outward man decays, the inward man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. 4.

To speak true, Death meddles with nothing but with the exterior part of Man; for our principal Fort and chief Bulwark, doth neither fear to be undermined nor sapt, nor to be won by Assault, for it is rais'd above the Heavens, and built upon the Rock of Eternity. It cannot be batter'd; for as the thunderbolts, the storms of Hail and ill weather cannot prejudice the Sunbeams, because they are of a Spiritual nature, so all the Fury of the World, all the powers of Hell, and the Rage of Death can never wrong the Soul that is of a Spiritual and Immortal Nature. This Castle can never be famished, for God furnisheth it with Manna from Heaven, and from the Rock upon which it is

built, there runs a source of living waters, that riseth to everlasting life. In one word, as the Serpents do crawl only upon the Dust, Death hath no power but upon the earthly part of Man; therefore our Lord Jesus Christ adviseth his Apostles, To not fear them that kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul.

At the very instant of our Souls separation from the Body, Death seems to have a great advantage upon us, but when I consider all, I find that it hath no cause to glory, and that it is without reason that it challenges the victory. When a valiant Captain marches out of a Town almost destroyed, to another more secure, and better fortified, with his weapons in his hand; we say, that he hath quitted his station, and not that he is overcome: Thus when this wretched Body decays, and that our Souls depart well armed with Faith and Hope, to lodge in a more secure place in the highest Heavens, nobody can say, to speak properly, that we have been overcome; And as it happens with such as sail on the wide Sea, when a violent storm threatens them with Shipwrack, they think themselves very happy, if they can quit their Veil, leave it to the mercy of the Winds and Waves, and escape to Land with their Riches and Lives safe: Thus it is with us who sail upon this tempestuous Sea of the world; for when Death raiseth its most cruel storms, we think our selves happy if we can leave this miserable Body, which seems as a ship to our Souls, and if we can secure our Spiritual Life and our Heavenly Riches; therefore we may justly say to the faithful Souls that are frightened when they see Death threatening to drown them in its Depths, as *St. Paul* to his Ship company, who did tremble for fear, at the sight of a rearing and furious Sea; *Take good courage my brethren, for I do assure you in the name of the living God, that your lives are secure, and that you shall lose nothing but this ship, Acts 27.* We may yet furnish them with stronger comforts, for these good Mariners lost their

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Ship without any hopes of recovering it again ; but we are assured that God will one day, gather up every piece of these broken Vessels of our Bodies, and will joyn them together in a more perfect estate.

Therefore Death doth not carry away our Bodies by violence, but we leave them willingly^Q; we do not stay for its summons, but we do prevent Death and give it a Licence ; when we have packt up our Bag and Baggage, we are ready to depart out of this wretched abode, where we endure all manner of calamities, for in this house defluxions do rain down ; If Vapors do arise, the Pillars and Foundation does tremble, the Joynts do open, the windows are darkened, and the burning Feavers, like violent fires, consume it.

I must not forget that the faithful do name their death, not only a removal of their Lodging, but a removal from a Tabernacle : this teacheth us that we must depart from hence with as much joy and readiness, as a soldier doth out of his Tabernacle, at the end of a laborious and bloody warfare ; and with as much pleasure as the Children of *Israel* did out of their Tents, under which they had remained in the Desert, to enter into the sweet and comfortable dwellings of the Land of *Canaan*.

Not only this Body is like to an hired House, or to a Tabernacle transported up and down, but it is, by Sin, become to our Soul a woful prison ; Therefore Death may be compared to the Messengers sent by King *Pharaoh*, on purpose to take *Joseph* out of his Dungeon, and bring him to his palace ; The Body that was created to be noble a Pavillion of Joy and Honour, is become to our Soul, a wretched and incommodious Prison ; Death is like to the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burned and consumed the Bonds of the three Children, without prejudicing their Persons or attire, *Dan. 3.* for it consumes those sad Bonds that derain our Soul enslaved to the Earth, but it doth not meddle with the Or-

naments of our Justice and Sanctification; it is like the Skin that encloseth the Child in his Mothers Womb, or like the Shell where the Chicken is formed; for of necessity it must be broken before we can enter into immortal Life: In short, we may say, That the Body which was given to the Soul, to be its Palace, is become, by Sin, its Grave and loathsome Sepulchre, far more noisome than that of *Lazarus*; and that death is like the voice that calls upon us, *Lazarus come out*. Faithful Souls, you see then, that as *Sampson* carried away the Gates of the City of *Gaza*, and transported them to the top of the Hill, so hath Jesus Christ our true *Sampson*, transported and carried the Gates of Death to the highest pitch of Glory; Therefore, whereas before we did look upon it with horror, at the entrance of Hell; now we may behold it with Confidence and Joy, saying as *Jacob* did of *Bethel*, *This is the Gate of Heaven*.

Seeing therefore, that this is the nature and condition of Death, I find that Men do give it too much advantage; for we should not offer to say, that such are dead whom God hath admitted into Eternal life; because the qualification should be derived from the chief and noblest part; as it is in nature, there is no generation without corruption, and we commonly say, that it is a Generation when the thing engendred is more excellent than the thing corrupted; as we say, that it is a corruption when the thing corrupted excels the thing that is engendred; Therefore our change and removal out of this world, should be rather stiled a Life than a Death; for if our Body Dies and Rots in the Earth, our Soul revives and mounts up to Heaven; and this mortal life that we leave in leaving the Earth, is nothing in comparison of that life that we shall enjoy with Christ and his Holy Angels: God is named the God of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*. Now he is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living, *Exod. 4. Matt. 22.*

I may also, without any Figure, say, That Death in respect of the Body, is no real Death, but a kind of sleep, as it is said in the Prophet *Daniel*, Many do sleep in the dust of the Earth, *chap. 12.* and in *Isaiah*, that the *Just sleep in their beds* : Therefore our Saviour speaking of *Fairus's* Daughter, declared, *The Child is not dead but sleepeth*, *Mat. 9.* and of *Lazarus*, his friend, *Lazarus our friend sleepeth, but I go to awake him.* Beloved, if thou art of the number of such as Christ loveth, thy Death will be but a kind of sleep, of a short continuance, and a few daies ; The Lord will raise thee up again, *For the hour cometh, and is already, That the Dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that shall hear shall revive,* *John 5.* During this Life the assaults of Death are no better than light skirmishes, the most sensible and most dangerous blow that it strikes in appearance, is when Death separates the Soul from the Body : but the last and most signal encounter, which will put an end to all disputes, will happen at the day of Judgment ; Jesus Christ will then appear from Heaven to the company of all his immortal Angels and Saints, to encourage us to the encounter ; He will come with a terrible voice of an Archangel, and the last Trumpet shall sound, then Death will endeavour to keep us still in its black prison, and our Bones will be found without life or motion ; but the Spirit of God shall breathe upon these dry Bones, and will cause them to revive ; As the Prophet *Jonas* was three days and three nights in the belly of the Whale, God Commanded the Fish to vomit him up again upon the ground. Thus, when we shall have made so long our abode in our Graves, as God hath appointed in his wisdom, Death shall be constrained to restore all that it hath swallowed ; and as *Daniel* came out of the Lions Den by break of day, those savage Beasts having done him no harm ; Thus, at the break of the last day, at the Rising of the Sun of Righteousness, we shall all go out of Deaths deep

deep Den; and as if God had sent his Angel on purpose to shut the mouth of this old Lion, we shall then find that he shall have done us no harm; instead of devouring of us, he will prove a faithful keeper of our bones; therefore the faithful may speak unto Death in the language of the Prophet *Micah*, *Rejoyce not against me, O mine Enemy, when I shall fall I shall rise, when I sit in darknes the Lord shall be a light unto me*, Mic. 7. 8. As *Moses* said to *Pharaoh*, We will go into the Wildernes to sacrifice unto God, we will go out of thine *Egypt* with our young, and with our old, with our Sons and with our Daughters, with our Flocks, and with our Heard, there shall not an Hoof be left behind, *Exod.* 10. Thus we, in an Holy Confidence, may talk with Death, Maugre thy Rage and Fury, we will go up to Heaven to sacrifice unto our God immortal praises, we shall get out of thy slavery; We, our Wives, our Children, our Brothers and Sisters, our Parents and Friends; all the People of God whom thou dost at present keep in a close restraint; notwithstanding the infernal attempts of thine inhumane power, there shall not remain so much as an handful, no not so much as the least grain of our Ashes behind us. When the Son of God shall appear in his Glory from Heaven, he shall consume all Death's Trophies and Monuments with irresistible Flames; so that it shall happen to this imperious Enemy of Mankind, as it happened to the Kings of the Amorites mentioned in the Israelitish History, *Josh.* 10. For as *Joshua* suffered them to live until he was returned from his victory, and then, when he had perfectly overcome all his Enemies, he Commanded them to be brought forth, and gave order to his Captains to tread upon their necks, and then with his own sword he dispatcht them, cast them into a Cave, and causeth great stones to be rowled at the entrance of it: Thus shall our true and Celestial *Joshua* deal with Death, he suffers it to reign while he is gone to pursue his Enemies; for the
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last Enemy that shall be destroyed by him is Death; when he shall have perfectly subdued all other Enemies, he will then conclude all his victories with a glorious end, and accomplish the Churches Triumph, by causing us to trample upon Death, that shall be cast into the bottomless pit, whereof the entrance shall be shut up forever, *Rev. 10.* Then shall be accomplished this glorious Prophecie, *Death is swallowed up in victory, 1 Cor. 15.* for the Spirit of God assures us in express words, *That Death shall be no more.* By what we have said, it may easily appear what is become of the Rope thrice twisted by the Devil, with an intent to strangle therewith all Mankind; for the Son of God hath cut in peices the first of these unhappy ties, by his Almighty power; by the Spirit of Sanctification he loosens the second by degrees; and by the last he draws us to himself, and then he burns and consumes it altogether; therefore we have no reason to fear an Eternal Death, nor to tremble when Hell opens wide its mouth: If we resist the Devil he flies away from us, *Jam. 4.* at last we shall trample him under our feet, *Rom. 16.* It is true, that the sad and doleful effects of the Spiritual death, do commonly draw out of us many a sad Groan and Tear, whilst our Soul remains in this sinful Flesh; we are already got out of the Tombs of Corruption and Sin, but yet bear about us, as it were, our Winding-sheet, and some odd Reliques of our natural Misery. But we have this consideration to comfort our drooping spirits, That Christ will shortly give the same order from Heaven for us, as he did for *Lazarus*, *Loose him and let him go, Joh. 11.* So that instead of the corruption of our Nature, that is so incommodious to us, he will invest us in Estate of Glory, Incorruption, Immortality, and perfect Happiness; for the Corporal Death, we may justly say, That our Lord and Saviour hath freed us from all the fears that it might beget in us; so that it is my judgment, that we may not only

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affirm, that we have not the least apprehension of it; but expect it with assurance; for if we be truly of the number of the faithful, and Gods adopted Sons, we hope, desire, and hasten Deaths arrival by our most earnest, and most passionate wishes.

What I have already declared in this Chapter, might satisfy any Christian Soul, and furnish it with sufficient considerations to strengthen it against all apprehensions of Death; But as one that is wont to buy Stuffs in a Shop, when he cheapens such as are slight, and of a small value, he casts his eye only upon a piece or a pattern, and by that judges of the rest; but when he intends to purchase a rich Tapestry of great value, he desires to visit and consider every part, one after another, and make an estimation of the value and beauty of every corner; So I judge, that the Wise and Religious Reader will desire now, that I have discover'd to him in gross, the Body of *Consolations against the fears of Death*, that I should in the next place unfold these hidden Excellencies, produce every part of them by degrees to his contemplation, and with my Pen, make him take notice of all the Rarities.

CHAP. VI.

From whence proceed the fears of Death.

AS a wise and discreet Physitian usually examines, with care, the causes of the Disease before he prescribes a Remedy; and as an experienced Chirurgeon searcheth the wound before he claps the Plaister to it; Thus I judge it necessary to seek with diligence from whence the fears of death proceed before we shall appoint the Remedies to the faithful Souls: for when we shall have perfectly understood the nature
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of the Disease and its principal Causes, we shall without difficulty be better able to assign a convenient Remedy; when we shall have searcht the wound, and washt it clean, we will, with Gods assistance, pour into it the true Balm of *Gilead*.

First, we have just reason to accuse our selves of too much unmindfulness of Death; we don't meditate, so often as we should, upon the misery and frailty of our poor and dispicable nature; we acknowledg it, I confess, with our tongues, that our life is but a breath in our Nostrils, a vapor that soon disappears, a shadow that quickly vanishes away; but in the mean time we flatter our selves in our hearts, with no more pleasant thoughts and desire, as *Herod*, that Man should look upon us as so many little Gods, *Acts* 12. We suffer our selves to be deceived by the flattering insinuations of our corrupted Flesh, and by the artificial suggestions of the old Serpent, that whispers to us, as to our first Parents, *You shall not dye*, *Gen.* 3.

2. We commonly affirm, that Death is inexorable without Ears; nevertheless we live as if we had concluded an agreement with Death, and had secret intelligence with the Grave, *Iſa.* 22. Death approaches with Feet of Wooll, without noise, we imagine therefore that it will never come near us, as that wicked servant of the Gospel, *Matth.* 24. that gathered from his Masters delays of coming, that he would not come at all. We hate and abominate the sight of all those things that represent to us any appearance of Death, or that calls into our minds its remembrance; if at any time its Image comes in our way, we turn from it our Eyes, and banish out of our fancy all imaginations of it, as of a most odious and deceitful illusion. Death seizeth upon us before we have well thought whither we be mortal or no; Therefore we are sooner surprized and astonished at the approaches, and we become like the foolish Israelites, that trembled and fled
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before *Goliab*, because they were not accustomed to behold him.

3. We have too great confidence, and depend too much upon second Causes; we look upon Death as a thing that happens by chance, or as an evil that may be prevented, or at least put away from us for a time; whereas we should be fully perswaded, that God hath determined and appointed, not only Death it self, but also all the causes and means by which it commonly happens; Therefore we are often fill'd with displeasure, and reduced to murmur and repine against God; we grin, and bite the stone, instead of adoring, in all humility, that wise Hand that casts it: In a word, when ever Death comes to us, we are ready to say to it, as the Devils to our Saviour, *Wherefore art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matth. 3.

4. We are too much wedded to those earthly vanities, we are inseparable from the World, we would willingly make here our abode for ever, and cannot abide to hear that Death will remove us; Our unlawful affections have no bounds, and we often spend our selves in the pursuance of the miserable advantages of the Earth. When we come almost to the end of our life, and of our mortal journey, it is then, that many of us are most earnest to make a large provision of Worldly Vanities; we build stately dwellings, and sumptuous Palaces at that very moment, when we should think of nothing but of building our Tomb, and preparing our Winding-sheet. We have so violent a passion for all the advantages of this life, that to separate us from them, it is to pluck out our Hearts, and tear our tenderest Bowels. When Death comes to our Bedside, and offers to pull us out, we are ready to say as the Sluggard in the *Proverbs*, *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little foulding of the hands*, Prov. 6. When our Divine Bridgroom knocks at our Gates, we are scarce willing to abandon our delights, as the Spouse
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in the *Canticles*; What faith the Worldling, Must I leave my sumptuous Palaces, my pleasant Dwellings, and my delightful Gardens? Must I relinquish all this rich Tapestry, these precious Moveables, and all these rare and exquisite Ornaments that enrich my Parlors, Chambers, and Closets? Must this unmerciful Death divest me so soon of all Offices and Dignities, and hinder me from a full and peaceable enjoyment of all these Riches and Treasures? Must it ravish from me, in an instant, all my Delights and satisfactions? Is there no remedy, but must I be pluckt from the embraces of my beloved Wife, from the sight of my dear Children, and from the sweet company of all my friends? Must I receive no more the services of my Domesticks? When we are in this miserable disposition, it is no wonder if death is terrible to us, and if it causeth us to resent the sharpness of its sting; for as *Absalom* when he was hanging by the hair of his Head, in a Tree of the Forrest, *Joab* took three Darts and struck him through the Heart; thus when our affections are too much wedded and entangled with the World and its vanities, and fill'd with the expectation of earthly contentments; it is then that they are miserably exposed to all the Darts and violent attempts of Death.

5. Another principal cause of the fear of Death, is our ill Life; We give our selves over to the vices, debaucheries, and licentiousness of this unhappy Age; we suffer our selves to be corrupted by ill company, and carried away with the Torrent of vicious Customs. It is therefore no wonder if death fills our Souls with apprehensions, for it comes to us armed with our sins, and is preceded by the remorse of Conscience, and horror of our Crimes: How came it to pass, that such a terrible astonishment fell upon King *Belshazzar*, when he saw the fingers of an hand writing upon the Wall of his Palace, the Sentence of his doom? *Dan. 5.* It was because he did profane the Holy Vessels of God's House

House; and because he did riot in the company of lascivious Women. Wherefore did *Felix* tremble, when he heard *St. Paul* discourse of *Justice, Temperance, and of Judgement to come*? Acts 24. It was because he was a wicked Varlet, given over to all manner of filthy and unjust living. Thus, because we profane the Members of our Body, that are as the Vessels of Gods Sanctuary and House, and because our life is vicious and disorderly, we can't abide to hear death mention'd, and when it comes to us, we are ready to speak to it in *Felix's* language to *St. Paul*, *Depart for this time*. So that the love of Sin, and the fear of Death, are as two Sisters that hold one another by the hands; or rather, they are as Twins that are born and dye together. As the Prophet *Amos* said to the Israelities, *Ye put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near*, Amos 6. So may we say to the Men in this age; Ye put far from you the day of Death, as much as you are able, and draw near to all manner of Impurity, Covetousness, Ambition, Pride, Vanity, Usury, Rapine, Violence, Envy, Malice, and such like Soul-plagues. You don't only draw near to these abominable Vices, but you do also worse, to lodge them in your Bowels, and to plant them in your Hearts; Certainly we may very well apply to all vicious persons, what the Prophet *Jeremy* tells of *Jerusalem*; *Her filthiness is in her skirts, she remembreth not her last end*, Lam. 1.

6. I have taken notice of another imperfection in us; we mistrust the Providence of God, and know not how to repose our selves upon his Fatherly Care; we have a too worthy esteem of our selves, and of our own sufficiency; We can't resolve to dye, because we fancy our selves very useful in the world, and that our Death would bring a considerable loss to the Church of God, to the State, or to our Family.

7. Because the Soul and Body are linkt together in a very strict union; we can't imagine how they can
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be separated without great and unspeakable pangs ; our infidelity is so great, that we can't rest satisfied upon the promise of God, who engages to succour us in our distress, and to deliver us from all our troubles, *Isa. 50.* It is true, *Jacob's* Ladder that reaches from the Earth to Heaven, doth fill us with admiration ; but it seems most difficult and uneasy to ascend. Paradise is Rich, Glorious, and Delightful to the uttermost ; but its Gate is strait, and choakt up with Thorns and Briers.

8. I judge that one of the chief causes of the fear of death, is, because we look upon God as a most severe and merciless Judge, inflamed with anger and fury against us, and armed with vengeance : Whereas we should consider and acknowledg him to be a merciful Father, full of compassion and kindness for Mankind. Every Slave trembles at the sight of his Lord, and there is no Malefactor but is afraid, when he appears before his Judge, to be put to the question ; and can I who am all spotted with sin, and black with my horrid crimes, can I appear before that Glorious Throne, that causes the Seraphins to cover their Faces with their wings ? *Isa. 6.* How can I that am but stubble subsist in the presence of the God of vengeance, *who is a consuming fire ? Heb. 10.*

9. There is another visible fault in us, we don't imbrace with a true and lively Faith, the Death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour ; we all speak of Jesus Christ crucified, but we don't know the Divine Vertue of his Crucifixion, nor feel its Efficacy ; we don't consider that his death hath torn in pieces the partition that did shut us out of the Heavenly Sanctuary, and that his blood doth trace us a way to Paradise, and procure an entrance into that place of Eternal Bliss.

10. We don't represent to our selves as we ought, to remove from our fancy the horror of the Sepulchre, how our Lord and Saviour hath been laid himself in the

Grave, and perfum'd it with his Holy and Divine sufferings. We don't imprint into our imagination, that it is just and reasonable that we should be conformable to Christ in his abasement, if we will have any share with him in his Glory and exaltation.

11. Besides, that which nourisheth in our Souls the fears of Death is this, we look upon it as if it were in its full strength and vigor ; whereas we should remember that Jesus Christ hath overcome and disarm'd Death by his powerful Resurrection, and that for our parts we need but follow the footsteps of his Glorious victories, and fasten that furious Beast to his Triumphant Chariot.

12. We don't consider as we should, with a serious and religious application of the mind ; How our Saviour Christ is not only risen from the Supulchre, victorious of death, but that he is also ascended up into the highest Heavens, as our fore-runner to prepare a place for us, and that by departing out of our miserable bodies, we follow the footsteps of our ever Blessed Saviour, to reap with him the fruits of his most Glorious Victories.

13. We stoop too much to consider our frail, corruptible, and mortal Nature ; and we seldom enter into this most useful Meditation , That by the Holy Ghost we are nearly and unseparably united with Jesus Christ the Prince of Life, and the Source of Light ; and that we have already in us the Seeds of Blessedness, of Glory and Immortality.

14. As the Children of *Israel* did murmur against *Moses* in the Desert, and did wish to be again in *Egypt*. This did proceed from a forgetfulness of their bitter slavery, under which they had groan'd, and of their painful labouring amongst the Bricks, and the heat of the Furnaces , and from their mindfulness of the pleasures alone, which they had lost ; They dreamt of nothing, but of the plenty of Bread and Flesh, of
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the Cucumbers, Onions, and of the Meats, with which they had so often fill'd their bellies; Thus we do repine at death, because we don't dream of the evils from which it delivers us, but think only upon the vain pleasures and seeming advantages of which it robs us.

15. We imagine that Death destroys and reduces us to nothing; And we don't consider, that it never meddles with the principal part of our being, but on'y pulls off from us Sin, and breaks the rest of the Chains of our Spiritual Bondage; so that Death is rather the Death of Sin, than of the faithful.

16. Here is another great fault in us; We don't lift up our minds to consider the Glory prepared for us at the Egress of our Souls out of our mortal Bodies: However we may demean our selves, and whatever we may say, we don't firmly, without doubting, believe the Felicities which God promiseth to us in the contemplation of his Face. Sometimes we may think upon the joys of Paradise, but it is a thought that doth pass through our Souls with too much speed, and don't take any root; so that there be many, if they were not ashamed, would be ready to speak in that Emperor *Adrian's* Language, *My little Soul, My dearest darling, O Guest and Companion of my Body, whither art thou now going?*

17. To these former causes of the fears of Death in us we may add another; That we cast too much, and suffer our eyes to dwell upon the rottenness and corruption that threatens our Body; whereas we should carry our eye-sight to behold its Glorious Resurrection, that shall soon follow. Pleasant Abode, and delightful Companion of my Soul, must Death, this cruel Death, separate it from thee with so much violence? Must thou part with thy dear and sweet company? Must my Soul leave thee upon such grievous and lamentable terms? That of so many Honours which have

been heapt upon thee, thou shalt not carry so much as their shadow to the Grave? That of so many rich Moveables and Treasures, thou shalt bear away nothing but a winding-sheet, a few Boards, or at the most, some pounds of Lead? When thou hast lived in so much splendor and magnificence, must thy covering be at last the Worms? When thou hast walkt so proudly in Palaces, Gilded with Gold, and perfum'd, must at last thy confinement be in a stinking and loathsome Sepulchre? Must these beautiful Eyes be clos'd? These Lips of Coral become pail? This Golden Mouth be stop't? and must this dainry Flesh rot and become odious to the eyes of the World?

18. In the last place, We don't think, as we ought, upon that Eternal Bliss and Glory that hath been prepared for us from the foundation of the World, and into which we shall enter, when Christ Jesus shall come from Heaven with his Holy Angels, to Judge both the Quick and the Dead; when he shall reunite our Souls and Bodies together for all Eternity; that *he may be glorified in his Saints, and wonderful in all the faithful.*

CHAP. VII.

The first Remedy against the fears of Death, is to Meditate often upon it.

WE become acquainted with the most dreadful things by custom and conversation; fresh Soldiers do commonly quiver and shake at the sight of an Enemy; they tremble at the Volleys of Shot, and, half dead, fall to the ground at the horrid noise of the great Ordnance; but when their courage hath been hardened by a long exercise, they can then,

then, without fear, seek the Enemy in his greatest advantages, and can go as merrily to the combat as to a Feast, or to a Triumph ; the showers of small shot, the Lightning and Thunder of the Cannon, can't make them so much as to shut their eyes, or stoop their heads ; They do then laugh at their former apprehensions : Thus the first conceits of Death do commonly terrify us ; but when we seriously meditate upon it and look it in the face, we shall not only contemn it, but we shall also seek it boldly in its retreats, and with an assured and undaunted countenance, we shall behold Death let fly all its Arrows and Launces, all its Thunderbolts, without the least apprehension ; As it is with them who are not wont to see Savage Beasts, they dare not draw near to them, and can scarce look upon them without fear ; but such as are familiarly acquainted with them, can touch them without apprehension, and freely play with them. Thus it is with those who have never had the confidence to look Death in the face, they tremble and are fill'd with astonishment, as soon as they see its approaches ; but those who do often behold Death, are familiarly acquainted with it, and therefore they can with confidence thrust their Fists into its jaws. *Moses* fled away from his Rod, when it was first turned into a Serpent ; but when he began to take it into his hands, and saw that it return'd to its former shape and being, he was far from running from it, or entertaining the least apprehension of it ; but rather he made a very happy use of it, and by Gods Command he wrought many great miracles. Thus it is with Death, it frights us at first ; but if we can but take hold of it with the hands of a true and lively faith, it will be so far from scaring or frightening of us, that it will discover to us a world of delightful Wonders.

Death therefore is so far from terrifying such as are accustomed with it, that it fills them full of comfort and joy; as a Child that looks upon his Father, who hath a vizard on his face, is frightened, and begins to cry; but if he hath but the confidence to pull off the Vizard, and take but notice of the loving smiles of his Parent, hid under that horrid deformity, he will not only cease from weeping, and settle his mind, but he will also leap for joy, and embrace him. Thus if we look upon Death with a timorous countenance, and behold its hideous appearance, we shall be struck with a sudden horror; but if we can with any assurance lift up its ugly Vizard, we shall soon discover our heavenly Father, and with tears of Joy we shall run to embrace him; as the Apostles when they espied our Saviour in the night walking upon the Waves of the Sea, cried out in a fright, thinking that it had been a Spirit; but when he drew near to them, and heard his voice, they perceiv'd him to be their Saviour, when therefore they took him into their Ship, the storm ceas'd immediately; Thus if we look upon Death at a distance, the blindness and ignorance with which we are possess'd, will represent to us a frightful Spirit; but if we examine and behold it nearer by the help of the Gospel Light, we shall find it to be our Salvation, and the accomplishing of our Redemption. All our fears will then be calm'd, and our Souls will return to their former repose: In a word, as he that runs from his Enemy, increaseth his courage, and renders him more earnest and resolved to pursue him; Thus when Death sees us tremble and decline its approaches, it becomes more proud and imperious over us. We must therefore think betimes of Death, represent it to our selves continually, and enter into an acquaintance with it; it was holy Job's practice, for he *cried unto the Pit, thou art my Father, and to the Corruption and the Worms, you are my Mother and my Sisters*, Job 16. And imagine that this was
the

the chief reason of *Philip of Macedon's* commanding a Page every morning to rouse him up out of his sleep, with, *O King, remember that thou art a mortal man.* For by this often repeated Lesson, he labour'd to humble his lofty mind, and teach his frail nature not to glory too much in the splendour of his Crown and Scepter, nor to abuse the power committed to his Trust. By this means also he became acquainted with Death, that it might not seem strange when it should come in earnest to snatch him away. This was also the design of that Emperor *Meruaan*, or *Meruanes*, who caused this Motto to be Engraven upon his Seal, *Remember that thou must dye.* These words did call to his mind that which his Courtiers did not dare to mention to him. So that this great Prince never confirm'd with his Seal, the death of any man; but at the same time he did represent to himself, that his own death was not to be avoided; for the same reason, the Noblemen of *China* are wont to have their Coffins ready made betimes in their Chambers, that at every moment they might look Death in the face; for the same cause the Egyptians in their most sumptuous Feasts, did commonly place a dead mans Scull in an eminent corner of the room; by this spectacle they intended not only to oblige the Guests to a moderation of their Joys, and to a curbing in of their unruly Lusts, but also to bring them acquainted with, and to accustom them to behold it amongst all their Delights. They treated Death, as if their design had been to invite it to their most delicious Feasts, that they might rejoyce together with it, *John* 19. I conceive that the Jews for the same cause did build their Sepulchres in their Gardens of Pleasure, that they also might have the image of death continually before them; and that in the midst of all their divertisements, it might be their most pleasant and ordinary entertainment. For us Christians, to oblige us to think upon Death, their is

no need that a Page should remember us every day that we are Mortal, nor that the Motto of a Ring should call to our minds, that we must dye; there is no need of a Coffin to be plac'd in our Chambers: in such things there is many times more Ostentation than Piety; nor is it needful that a dead mans Scull be put before our Eyes, or that a Sepulchre be built or hewen in our Gardens and places of Recreation and Delight; for as *Alexander* the Great, understood that he was a Mortal Man, by the Blood that ran out of his Wounds; Thus the Diseases unto which we are subject, and the daily infirmities that we feel, do sufficiently instruct, and assure us, that we are Mortals: And as a famous Philosopher, when he receiv'd the unhappy news of his only Son's untimely death, answer'd the Messenger with a settled countenance; *I knew, said he, that I had begot him a Mortal man*, Xenoph. Thus will the faithful say, without change of countenance or appearance of fear, when his death is declar'd to him, I knew that my Mother had conceiv'd me a Mortal Man; I knew very well that Death is the Tribute that we must all pay to Nature, and that upon this condition, I am enter'd into the world.

If we will make use of any exterior help, to imprint this Lesson into our Fancy, we must practice with care the advice of the wise man, It is better to go to the house of Mourning than to that of Feasting, *Eccles. 7.* for that is the end of all Men, and the living will lay it to his heart; never look upon a diseased Body stretch'd upon a Bed, nor upon a dead Corps in a Coffin; but remember that this is an universal Law, unto which all Mankind must pay obedience; and that it is the broad Road of all the Earth, and that there thou mayest behold the lively image of thy future Estate. I conceive this may be a good expedient, and very successful to entertain in our minds the continual thoughts of Death, to make our last Will be-

times

times, and frequently to pursue it; for as it happens, when we meditate upon a farewell that we are to take of our friends, we feel in our souls the same affections and motions as are in us at the moment of our separation. Thus will it be with us, when we seriously meditate upon the last farewell that we are to bid to the World. Death appears to us upon our Lips, or rather we fancy our selves at that instant, already in the sweet embraces of our Divine Jesus, our Glorious Redeemer.

Besides those things that are unusual and extraordinary, I find nothing in, nor out of us, nothing that we feel, taste or relish, in short, nothing that passeth either in our private or publick conversation, but is able to renew in our minds the serious consideration of Death. The Flesh that thou dost eat, the Wooll that cloaths thy nakedness, the Silk that adorns thy Body; in general, all thy Garments and Ornaments are but the sparkles of the Dead Creatures; the sight therefore of all these things, must call to thy remembrance thy frail and mortal Estate, and cause thee to meditate upon the Preachers saying. *The same accident that happens to the Beast, the same happens to Mankind, as is the death of the one, so is the death of the other.* They have all the same Breath, and Man hath no advantage above a Beast, for all is vanity, all goes to the same place, all proceeds from the Dust, and shall return to the Dust again.

Never pull off thy Cloaths, but remember that thou must shortly quit this miserable Body, and lay it down in the Grave: When thou art entring into thy Bed, think upon the Sepulchre where thou must one day be stretch'd; if thou dost awake in the night, consider that Death will shortly come, and put out the Taper of thy Life; let thy Sleep be an image of thy Death, and let it call to thy mind, how thou must within a few days sleep in a bed of Dust; when thou awakest,
think

think upon the delightful sound of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, that shall rowse thee out of Deaths long sleep: say within thy self when thou arisest, It may be that I shall never rise again till the Son of God shall come from Heaven, to lift me up out of the Grave with his Almighty hand; when we cast our Eyes upon the rising Sun, Let us say within our selves, it may be I shall never behold any other Sun rise again, but the Son of Rightousness, that carries healing under his wings; Consider when thou dost put on thy Garments, that the time is coming, when thou must be cloathed with a more Magnificent and Glorious Robe, a Robe of Light and Immortality; when thou dost sit down to eat, think upon the hour that is drawing near, in which death will feed upon thy Carcass; imagine that it may be, that this is the last time that thou shalt sit at the Table, that next thou maist sit with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, with all the blessed Martyrs, who have wash'd and whiten'd their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, and that it may be, that thou shalt never taste any more but of the food of Angels, and of the fruit of the Tree of Life, and that thou shalt never drink but of the new Wine in the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the Rivers of Eternal pleasures, that run from the Throne of God.

Every time that thou goest out of thy dwelling, or changeest thy abode, fancy to thy self that in a short time thou must depart out of this Mortal Tabernacle. Art thou alone, and separated from humane Society? remember that within a few days, Death will separate and divide thee. Art thou going to any meeting, or entering into any company, or marching to the Holy Assemblies, discourse with thy self in this manner, It may be, that I shall never go to any other company, until I come to the Church and Congregation of the First-born, whose names are written in Heaven. Art thou invited to the marriage of a friend? Say unto thy
Soul,

Soul, It may be I shall never go to any other Feast, but to the marriage of the Lamb offered from the foundation of the World. Dost thou see a rich and glorious Palace, or a pleasant Garden? say to thy self, It may be, I shall never see any other Palace, but that where the living God doth dwell, and it may be I shall never behold any other place of pleasure, but the Celestial Paradise.

If thou dost cast down thy eyes to look upon the Earth, upon which thou dost tread; Consider at the same time, that this Earth, or some like to it, shall afford thee a Grave, and that thou shalt sleep there the sleep of death: Remember what God told *Adam*, *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return*, Gen. 3. or say with the Holy man *Job*, *Remember, I pray thee, that that hast formed me of clay, and that thou shalt reduce me to dust. I shall sleep in the dust, and if thou seekest for me in the morning, I shall be no more*, Job 20. Job 7.

If thou takest a view of the Plants, of the Herbs and Flowers, dont forget what the Word of God speaks concerning our Life, in the 90 Psalm, *That Man is like the Grass which groweth up, in the morning it flourisheth and is green, in the evening it is cut down and whithereth*. And in the 103 Psalm, *As for man his days are as Grass, as Flowers of the field, so he flourisheth, for the wind passed over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more*. And elsewhere, *All flesh is like Grass, and the Glory of Man like the Flower of the field*, Isa. 40. 1 Pet. 1.

If thou dost behold the Currants of Water, the Rivers and the Torrents; remember at that time what is said in the 14 Chapter of the second Book of *Samuel*, *for we must needs dey, and are as water spilt on the ground*; And in the 90 Psalm, *Thou carriest them away, as with a floud*.

If thou tak'st notice of the shadow of the Needle in a Dial that follows the swift motion of the Sun, or

to the shadows which solid bodies cast upon the Earth; In the evening they stretch a great way, and a little after vanish; consider seriously, and engrave in thy mind this excellent Sentence; *Man is like to vanity, his days are as a shadow that passeth away*, Psal. 144. and say, as David, *I am gone as the shadow when it declineth*, Psal. 109.

If thou hearest the roaring of the Winds, that God taketh out of his Storehouses, Lift up thy Soul unto God thy Creator, and say with Job, Job 7. *Remember that my life is but a wind, mine eye shall see no more good*, Job 30. that is, the imaginary Good of this miserable World. And elsewhere, *Thou liftest me up to the wind, thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance*.

If thou takest any delight in the sight of Birds that fly in the Air, Let this excellent thought enter into thy mind; *My days are passed away, as the Eagle that hasteth to the prey*, Job 9.

If thou lookest up to the Glory and Beauty of the Heavens, and seeth the ravishing light of the Stars; consider that thy God who hath form'd thee after his Image, is so good and noble, that he will not suffer thee to dwell for ever, or perish amongst this slimy and miserable Earth, but to dwell with him for ever in the Heavens; and that at the end of thy Race, he will raise and carry thee into the Palace of his Glory, where thou shalt shine as the Sun in its greatest splendor.

If thou dost meditate upon the changeableness of the seasons, remember that the Spring of thy Infancy, the hot Summer of thy Youth, the Autumn of thy Maturity, and the sad countenanc'd Winter of thy cold and decrepid Age, shall succeed one another in the same order.

Let him who travels by Land, think upon Job's complaint, *My days have been swifter than a Post, they flee away, they see no good*, Job 9. Let him call to mind the
Apostles

'Apostles excellent saying, *This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before; I press forwards towards the mark, for the prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus, Phil.*

Let him who sails upon the Sea, fancy the whole World as a great Sea tost up and down with several furious Waves, our Life as a dangerous Voyage, and our Days as Ships, that pass away in a moment; and let him consider that the last breath of Death will drive us into the Haven of Eternal Felicity, to the enjoyment of immortal Glory, *Job 9.* Doth God bless us with Children? let us understand that we are minded by them of our Mortality, for they come to take our room, and to succeed to our Estate; Doth God take them away to his Rest, and those of whom we are most fond? Let this advertise us, That God intends thereby to cut off all the lower Roots, that tie us to this Earth, to unloose our hearts and affections, that we may offer them up to him alone. Instead of spending our selves in Tears, and indulging our foolish humour in needless displeasures; Let us comfort our selves with this consideration, That, by this means, a part of our selves is entr'd into Heaven, and that tother part will follow apace. Let us say with *David, We shall go to them, but they shall not return to us, 2 Sam. 11.*

Let the Rich man when he reckons his Money, remember that God hath reckon'd and appointed his days; and let this Order sound continually in his Ear, *Give an account of thy Stewardship, Luke 16.*

Let the Magistrate, when ever he delivers his Vote, or pronounce a Sentence, be arm'd with this consideration, That he who sits in the Judgment Seat here below, shall stand at the Bar, and be judged himself above. That one day he shall appear as a poor prisoner at the Tribunal of his great God; That the Books will be open'd, and that the universal Judge of the World will

will peruse every particular of his accusation: That he must render an account, not only of his words and actions, but also of his most secret thoughts, and that without any examination at the Rack, God will discover the very bottom of his heart.

Let the Gentleman, whenever he receives his Rents and his Revenues, call to mind the Tribute that he must needs pay to death. Let the Prince and the Lord, when he handles the Royal Patents, and his antient Charters, or when he examines the Homage and Duties to be paid to his House and Family, take notice that he must go in person to Heaven Gates, and pay his Homage to the Divinity: Let the King, who sits in his Seat of Justice, or Chair of State, think upon the Throne of the King of Kings, before which he must appear, as well as the most wretched Caitiff, and the meanest of his Subjects; and that he must give account before a just God, who is no respecter of Persons.

Let the Minister be never employed about the Duties of his Function, but let him Long and wish for that happy day, in the which, the Lamb shall instruct and feed him in person, and lead him to the Fountains of living water.

Let the Christian Soldier engrave upon his Sword this Sentence of *Job*, *Is there not as it were a warfare appointed to all Mortals on Earth?* *Job* 7. And instead of thirsting after humane blood, let him prepare to encounter with Death it self.

Let the Husbandman, when ever he sows his Seed, or when he reaps the Corn of his Fields, be mindful of the season that comes on apace, in which his Body must rot in the Earth, that it might grow up to Eternity; Let him think upon what *St. Paul* saith, *O fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it dye*, *1 Cor.* 15. and let him meditate upon *Dauids* comfortable persuasions, *They who sow in Tears, shall reap with Songs of Triumph*, *Psal.* 126.

Let

Let an Handycraftsman that works in his shop, imprint in his mind, this excellent Sentence, *Our days are like the days of an hireling*; and when he hath ended his Task, and that he is departing to his Rest, let him comfort himself with this assurance, That as soon as he shall have ended that work that God hath given him to do, he shall rest from all his labors, *Job 7*.

When ever the Physitian visits his Patient, or when the Chyrurgeon tends upon his wounded Bodies, let them consider, that they have no Secret nor Art able to protect them from Death, or to cure the wounds that it strikes in our corruptible Nature.

Let the most cunning Lawyers, the most advised Counsellors, and the most eloquent Orators, remember that all their Rhetorick and subtilty will never obtain for them their Suit against Death, nor procure a moment of respite and delays.

And let the most Learned Philosophers, learn, *That the soundest Philosophy is the meditation of Death*.

In short, Whatever be our Employment, Condition, or Age, let us lift up our minds and hands unto God, to speak to him in the Language of the Prophet David; *Lord, let me know my end, and the number of my days, that I may know how long I am to live*. Or of Moses, *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Consideration of Death.

O my God and Heavenly Father, seeing that it hath been thy good pleasure, that I should be born of a mortal Nature, and that this wretched Body that comes out of the Dust, should return to Dust againe; Give me Grace to be continually mindful of my frail and dying condition, and seriously to meditate upon the changes of Time,
that

that consumes all things, the variety of the seasons, the unconstancy of the World, and the strange disturbances of the Earth, as remembrancers of the last change that shall happen to our Persons; Give me Grace to look upon my bodily infirmities, and the Diseases which commonly afflict me, as so many Bailiffs and Messengers that call upon me, that the time of my departure, out of this earthly Tabernacle, draws near. Let the Bed where I sleep mind me, that when I have ended my great days work, my Body must repose it self in a bed of Dust; O that I might consider as often as I cast off my Cloaths, that within a few days I must cast off this mortal and corruptable Body; that the sleep that benums my Sences, is an image before me of Death, that shall destroy all the functions of this animal life. Let the Graves and Sepulchres of my Friends and Parents, represent to me my future abode. O merciful Lord, give me Grace and Courage to look so often upon Death and the Grave, that they may never-fright nor terrify me; That this consideration be so natural to me, and so pleasant by custom, that it may fill my Soul rather with joy, than with grief and displeasure. It is true, I am born to dye, but I am satisfied, that I shall dye to live for ever with my God, the Auther of my Life, and the Fountain of Blessedness, Amen.

CHAP. VIII.

The second Remedy against the fears of Death, is to expect it at every hour.

IT is not sufficient to think often upon Death, and to discourse of it in an excellent manner; for there be some that mention Death very frequently, and with many pious reflexions; yet nevertheless they cannot boast of being free from all apprehensions of Death; their Tongue is always ready to speak of Death, but their Heart cannot yield to expect it; they know that Death will seize upon them, but they entertain this dangerous opinion, that the time is not yet come; they acknowledg that they are indebted to God and Nature, but they delay the payment of the Debt from day to day, as if they were able to corrupt the Serjeants of Death, and obtain a Reprieve at their pleasure. There is no man so old and decrepid, but flatters himself with the fancy of having yet at least a year to live in the world. In short, we imagine always, that we perceive Death at a vast distance from us, and that we shall soon enough fit our selves to receive it as we ought; therefore when-ever, or where-ever it comes to drag us out of the World, it surprizeth and astonisheth us.

If we will prevent this mischief, we must not only consider that we are mortal, but that our life is short and of no long continuance; we must continually say with Job, *Are not my days few?* Job 10. and imprint in our minds this Sentence of David, *The Lord hath made my days as an hand-breath, mine age is as nothing before him,* Psal. 39. or that of Moses, *The best of our days are but labour and sorrow, for they are soon cut off, and we fly away,* Psal. 90.

The Antients painted *Time* with wings, to express its inevitable swiftness. The Holy Spirit compares our Life to a Weavers Shuttle, to an hired Servant, to a Post that runs apace, to a Packet-Boat or to an Eagle that flies after its Prey. The Sacred Writers speak of our Life as of a Torrent of Waters, of a Cloud, a Vapor, a Wind, or a Breath : They tell us that our days are gone as a Dream, they fly away as a Shadow, they vanish as a word in the Air, and that they perish as a Thought. In a word, all the Lightness and the most unconstant things of the World, whereof the motion is very suddain and quick, are employed in Holy Scripture, to express the vanity of our Life, and the shortness of our days.

Besides that, our Life is of a short continuance, it slides away insensibly, like to a Clock, the Wheels move without ceasing, although the Hand appears to us to be steady ; or to a Plant that grows continually, although the increase and growth is not to be discerned by our Eye-sight ; or like to a Man who stands in a Ship under Sail, he goes forward whither he will or no ; Thus whether we Sleep or Wake, whether we Go or Lye down, whether we Eat or Fast, whether we Work or Rest, we proceed on continually forward towards our Grave ; our Body is like a Tree eaten continually by Worms, for the day and the night feed upon it, without intermission ; in vain do ye banish out of your minds the thoughts of Death, if ye will not call it to your remembrance, it will not fail to mind and remember you ; the more ye fly from it, the more it follows and pursues you at the heels ; and when ye imagine Death to be farthest off from you, it is nearest to you.

As the Canker when it infects and enters into the Breast, it devours the Flesh without interruption ; so *Time* consumes and devours us continually : The Meat that we swallow, and that nourisheth us, brings us by degrees into the embraces of Death, as the Oil that
causeth

causeth a Lamp to burn, leads it to its end; or as when a Torch is lighted, it begins to dye, as soon as it begins to burn; thus I may say without excess, that the very first moment of this Animal Life, is the first moment of our Death. As we say of all sublunary Bodies, that the Generation of the one, is the Corruption of the other: so is it with *Time*, the birth of an hour, of a day, of a week, of a month, or of a year, is the death of that which preceeds; It is like a wheel, that mounts to no other end, but to fall down again.

Seeing therefore that our Life is nothing else but a continued Death, in proper terms, we are mistaken to name only the moment of the separation of the Soul and Body, the hour of death; for as when many Cannon shot are discharg'd against a Castle, to open a breach, we don't say that the last hath done the work; or as when an hard stone is cut with Chiswel and Hammer, or insensibly cav'd or undermined with Water, the last blow or drop don't carry away alone the glory of the performance: Thus when our Bodies decay and crumble away to dust, we must not only consider the last strugglings against Death, or the last attempt of this Enemy. Of a Ladder by which we ascend and descend, we view every step from the top to the bottom; Of an Hour-Glass we look to every grain of Sand; Of a Voyage or Journey, we reckon the first League, as well as the last; And in a Race, we take notice of the first step that we go out, as well as of the last when we stop: Thus we must reckon our Death to begin from the first moment that we draw our breath, until the last when we yield up the Ghost.

Besides what happens every moment to this poor and despicable nature, an infinite number of strange, unwonted, and unexpected accidents, do stop and shorten our Race. The Taper is not always consum'd by its own flame, many blasts of wind and showers of rain do extinguish it. If our Life is short, it is no

less weak and uncertain. the Body in which we lead a languishing life, is like *Jonas's* Goard, for if it be but mov'd with a contrary and unwholsome blast, or toucht by an unhappy Worm, it withers upon a suddain, *Jonas* 4. This was the thought of *Eliphaz*, when he saith, *We dwell in houses of Clay, our foundation is in the Dust, we are crushed before the Moth*, *Job* 4. When God intends to destroy Mankind in his wrath, and kill multitudes in his displeasure, he doth not always employ the agency of Angels, as when he cut off all the first-born of the Land of *Egypt*, when he stretched forth the sword of his vengeance upon *Jerusalem*, and when he kill'd of *Senacharib's* Army in one night, one hundred four-score and five thousand Men; He doth not always let loose the wicked Spirits, as when he gave them leave to raise a furious Tempest, which cast to the ground the House where *Job's* Children were, and buried them in the ruines, *Job* 1. He doth not always open the fountains of Heaven, as when he wash'd away the first wicked world with a fearful deluge, *Gen.* 7. He doth not always cause fire and brimstone to rain from Heaven, as he did upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, upon *Adma* and *Zeboim*; He works not always miracles in the waters, as when he drown'd *Pharaoh* and his Egyptian Host in the waves of the Red Sea; He prepares not always Whales to devour us, as he did *Jonas*; He sends not always burning-Serpents, as to the murmuring Generation of Israelites in the Desarts; He commands not always the Earth to open and swallow us up, as it did *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*; He sends not always from above great Hailstones, as when he knock down the Amorites; He destroys us not always by flames that proceed from his presence, as he did *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered unhallowed Fire upon his Altar; He Commands not always the Lions and the Bears of the Forrest to issue out and devour us, as he did when the rebellious Prophet was kill'd, and when the ill-tutor'd

tor'd Children of *Bethel* mockt *Elisha*; In short, God employs not always the Plagues and Judgments of Pestilence, of War, and of Famine; the unpleasent smell of a fuming Snuff, a flying vapor of malignant Smoak, is able to choak and kill us in a moment: A Fly, the Kernel of an Apple, an Hair of the Head, or the Seed of a Grape, or Ashes, or Sand, or some other Atom, may stop the breath of our life. Therefore God adviseth us by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Cease ye from Man whose breath is in his Nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* *Isai. 2.*

It is to be consider'd that these mischances happen very frequently, and in every place Death lays for us its snares, every where, as well in the bosom of our tender hearted Parents, and in the embraces of our dearest friends, as amongst the most barbarous and savage People, and amongst our most inhumane Enemies; Its invisible Darts fly up and down every where; and as the Psalmist informs us, *The Pestilence walketh in darkness, and destruction wasteth at noon-day*, *Psal. 91.* Death is as busy on the solemn Festivals, as well as in the working days; it drags us as easily from the Table, where we take our delights, as from the bed of Sorrow, where we sigh and groan; there is no sacred retreat where we may find a refuge; it hath no more regard of the Temples dedicated to Gods service, than of the common houses; All the Riches of *America*, and the power of the greatest Monarchs, are not able to protect us from its pursuance; it requires a present payment of the Debts that we owe; and it is not possible to appear by an Attorney, at the Summons that it sends to us.

Death claps not its warnings on the posts of Doors, it thrusts them not into the hands of Messengers or Lacqueys; there is not one Summons, but it may write down upon it these words, *Speaking to him in Person*: it surpriseth us at home and abroad, in our Closets, and

in the streets, in our Beds, in our Sedans, in the midst of our Feasts, and all our Pomp. It offers violence to the Sacred Person of the greatest Kings, in their most sumptuous Palaces, in their most flourishing Cities, and in their strongest Fortifications, in the midst of their most faithful Subjects, and most victorious Armies, upon their Thrones, and in their triumphing Chariots. As King *Abab* when he was going to take possession of *Naboth's* Vineyard, told the Prophet *Elijah* in a rage, *Thou hast found me mine Enemy*, 1 Kings 21. Thus when the prophane Worldlings dream of nothing but of the pleasant enjoyment of their unjust possessions, and of swimming in the Blood and Sweat of the meaner people, they meet unexpected Death, which they curse in their hearts, and if it did not stop their mouths, they will say also in their rage, *Hast thou found me out mine Enemy?*

This Holy Meditation caus'd the wisest King upon Earth to tell us, *Man knoweth not his time, as the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the snare, so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil time, when it falls suddainly upon them*, Eccl. 9. 12. This same Consideration hath caused this excellent Sentence to be written in the Book of *Job*; *In a moment, shall they dye, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and past away, and the mighty shall be taken away without hand*, Job 34. That is, that to destroy Kingdoms and whole Nations, and to carry away the most lusty and mighty Men, Death hath no need of other assistance, but its own Arm.

Do you desire, Christian Reader, the design of all this discourse? Let me tell you then, that seeing Death is certain, and not to be avoided, and that there is nothing so uncertain as the hour of its arrival, we must so live as if we were to breath forth the last gasp at every moment; we should behave our selves, as if we had always our Souls upon our Lips, ready to yield them
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into the hands of our great Creator, and to speak in *Job's Language, Having our Flesh between our teeth, and our Souls in our hands, Job 13.* Seeing that we know not at what time, nor in what place Death intends to come upon us, let us expect it at every moment, and in every place. Seeing that we lodge in this Earthly Tabernacle without *any* assurance of Time, let us be ready to depart at the first warning; for it will be far better for us to go out willingly, than to be drag'd out against our wills; it is not convenient that Death should carry us away in the same manner as the Sea bears and tosseth a dead Corps upon its waves; But we must in this occasion imitate the discreet Pilate or Mariner, that trim his Sails, and helps by his Art the Winds and the Tide to drive him to his desired Haven: We should not follow Death as the Malefactor follows the Executioner that leads him to suffer; but as the Child follows his Father that conducts him to a Feast; we should not engage him in a combat with Death by constraint, as the antient Slaves did with the Wild Beasts in the Roman Amphitheatres; but we should imitate *David's* generosity, who, of his own accord, march'd out of the Camp of *Israel*, to fight with *Goliath*: It is better for us to attack and seize upon Death, than to be surprized and devoured by it unawares.

Come when thou wilt, O Death! thou shalt never surprize me, for I wait for thee at every moment with my weapons ready in my hand; Thou shalt never drag me forcibly, for I will follow thee willingly and joyfully; Although thou art mine Enemy, yet will I speak to thee in the Language of the Spouse, in the *Canticles*, to her beloved, *Draw me, and I will run after thee.* Nay, I will meet thee in the way, and receive thee with hearty embraces; for instead of dreading thy coming, I desire it passionately, and hope for it; for at thy first arrival, as soon as I shall have seen thee, I

shall have overcome thee, O blessed and happy day that assures me of such a glorious Victory, and of such an Eternal Triumph.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the continual expectation of Death.

O Gracious God, in whose power alone, and at whose pleasure are the Times and the Seasons; I know that it is appointed to all men once to dye, and that the Grave is the dwelling which thou hast prepared to receive all Mankind; we understand sufficiently by the experience of former Ages, that none is able to say, I shall live, and shall not see Death. Thou, O Almighty God, our Supreme Judge hast pronounced our irrevocable Sentence in the Earthly Paradise, that we must dye; so that I should be guilty of the greatest folly and madness, if I did not firmly believe that I must dye as others, and follow at my turn in the way of all flesh; But Lord, thou hast been pleased to hide from our knowledge, the wonderful proceedings of thy providence, and doth not suffer us to see the Hand that marks out the last hours of our Life: We can perceive no shadow to discover to us with certainty, when shall be the going down of our Sun; we know not at what hour of the day, or of the night, thou wilt call us away to appear before thy great Tribunal. Give us therefore Grace, O merciful God, to be always ready to answer to thy Call, and to obey thy Holy Commands; that I may be as a Ship at Anchor, that stays only for a Wind to set her Sails forward; or as a Soldier who waits only for the Signal to march to the Encounter. Give me Grace, O good Lord, that I may be like the good and faithful Servant, who expects his Masters coming; and hears his voice as soon as he calls; or like the wise Virgins, who were ready to meet the Bridegroom, and to follow him into the Marriage Chamber, seeing that I

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can never know, neither the time nor the place, when Death will come to me. O that I might expect and wait for it at every moment, and at every place! O that I might live in such a manner, as if I were always ready to dye. That my Soul were always upon my Lips, prepared to fly away. That I were continually in readiness to commit it into thy hands. O my God, my Faithful and Merciful Creator, By this means I shall receive Death with Joy, when it comes as thy Servant and Messenger; and I shall follow it willingly, being certainly perswaded that it will lead me into Eternal Life, and introduce me into thy Glorious and Immortal Palace. Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for Youth.

O Almighty God, and Universal Light, that enlightenest every Man coming into the World, the only Author of my Being, by whose Gracious allowance I breath, Thou, O Lord, hast formed and fashioned my Body, with thy Divine hand, and hast put into it an immortal Soul, created after thy likeness. Thou hast not only bestowed upon me a Life, but hast, by thy continual care, preserved my Soul, and kept my Body from all the dangers, unto which this weak and frail Nature is always Subject. Although I feel my self lusty and strong, if thou withdrawest away from me thy Spirit, and that Divine Vertue that sustains me, I shall instantly fall away, and return again into nothing, from whence thine Almighty Hand hath taken me. O merciful Lord, seeing that I live by thee alone, make me to live only to thee, and for thee, that all my actions may tend to thy Glory, and Praise thee; That I may consecrate to thee with all my heart, the First-Fruits of my Life, and the Flower of my Age, that I may remember my Creator in the days of my Youth, and that I may abstain from Vice before the Time come, in which I shall say, That I have no pleasure therein. O Father of Mercies, pardon

don and forgive all the Sins and Infirmities of this foolish and unconsiderate Youth. Give a stop to all the unruly motions, and repress the violent attempts of this boiling Age; tame this miserable Flesh, that is not obedient to the will of its God; That if the dread of thy Holy and great Name, and the respect that I owe to thy Sacred Eyes that behold me, are not sufficient to recall me from the Commission of sin, and to oblige me to obedience; Give me Grace to look continually upon Death, that appears round about me, and it may be in my very bosom; Give me Grace to listen daily to the Heavenly voice that calls me to come forth before the Tribunal of the Great Judge of the World, who spies my most secret actions, who reads the most inward thoughts of my mind, and examines all the passages of this most wretched life.

O that this flourishing Age, and this perfect Health that I enjoy, might never flatter me with the conceit of being free from, and out of the reach of Deaths merciless Darts; But let me remember that there are more Flowers and Blossoms that fall to the ground, than Men gather of Fruits; and that more tender and young Plants are taken up by the Root, than are hewen down of old and overgrown Trees. O that I might have always in my mind this consideration, That a greater number of Babes and Children are buried, than of old Men; and that the first person who was dead and buried in the Earthly Paradise, was but a young Man in the flower of his Age. Great God of the Spirits of all flesh, wean my Heart and Affections from the World, from all deceitful Pleasures, and from these inferior Vanities, that I may find in thee all my Joy, and my most ravishing Delights. Let me not feed my fancy with the vain hopes of having yet many years to spend in ease, and in the pleasure of this life; but let me remember that there is no part of it free from evils, from crosses, cares and displeasures. That the greenest Fruit hath many times a secret Worm that devours it, as well as the ripest; and that the freshest blossom hath prickles, as well as the most flourishing

ing or decaying Roses. The more I shall live in this miserable and corrupted Age, the more evil I shall suffer, and the more bitterneß I shall drink, and the more I shall spot my Soul, and offend my God; I shall have liv'd sufficiently, if I have learnt to live well, and to prepare to dye well. I shall do both, if thine Holy Word become my guide, and if thine Holy Spirit Sanctify me, and Direct me in thy Will, which is Good, Holy, Pleasant and Perfect. Assist and strengthen me, O Lord, that I may find thy Yoke easie, and thy burden light. O good God, if thou prolongest my days, increase in me the Riches of thy Grace, and enflame my Soul with thy Love; but if thou dost cut me off betimes, let me not be so great an Enemy to my self, as to be sorry, because thou wilt so soon transport me into an happy and immortal Estate, because thou art pleas'd to abridg my Labors, to put a period to the cruel War against my filthy Lusts, and to bestow upon me the Crown in the middle of my Race. I shall obtain sufficient Glory and Comfort, if thou dost grant me strength enough to overcome the Devil, vanquish Death, and triumph over the Enemies of my Salvation. O let me not be so mad and foolish to lament for the loss of a moment, that flies away apace; seeing thou dost promise to introduce me into an Eternity, where there is no alteration nor shadow of change, and where thou shalt bleß me with an eternal, flourishing, and happy Youth. O my good God, I am ready to Glorify thee, either in Death or in Life, seeing that thy Son Jesus Christ is to me gain, whether I live, or whether I dye, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for Old Age.

O God, the Antient of days, and Father of Eternity, it is thy Pleasure, that in every Season and Age, thy Children be prepared for Death; I have therefore good cause, O Lord, to prepare and dispose my self for that last hour; I who have already a foot in the Grave, Grant, I beseech

beseech thee, that the more this outward Man decays, the more the inward man may be renewed day by day; That this weak and infirm Body, that stoops towards the Earth, teach me to lift up my Mind and thoughts towards Heaven. Grant, that old Age that hath furrowed my Face, and wrinkled my Skin, may also wipe off all the spots of my Soul, and drive from my Heart, all displeasure and grief: That Age that causes my Knees to quiver, and whitens my Skin, may strengthen my Faith, and refresh my Hope and Assurance upon thee; and that Death that pursues me close at the heels, may cause me to seek a shelter under the protection of the Prince of Life. O Soveragin Lord of Heaven and Earth, thou seest the pitiful condition unto which I am reduc'd; I am become a trouble to my self, and useless in the world; my Soul is weary of its abode, by reason of the griefs that it endures, for I do but lead a dying Life, or rather a living Death. My Good God and Creator, I have been under thy protection before I was born from the Womb of my Mother; thou hast bin my God, and assured Refuge. Thou, O Gracious Lord, hast bless'd my Infancy and Youth, and crown'd all my years with thy Fatherly Grace, and loaden me with thy Blessings; Leave me not, I pray thee, in my white and decrepid old Age; and now that my strength faileth, be thou the Rock of my Soul, and the strength of my Life: My years are pass'd as a Torrent of Waters; at present, I am nothing but the shadow of a shadow, that ceaseth to be; but thou art always the same, and thy years shall never fail. As thou hast no beginning, thou shalt never have an end. Renew my days, as the Eagles; Animate, I beseech thee, and quicken this Death, these Ashes that I carry; but rather reach to me thy hand, and take me out of this Dwelling of Clay, that rots and decays with age, into thine Heavenly Jerusalem; I have lost all taste of earthly Meats and Drink; It is now high time that thou shouldest satiate me with the Dainties of thy Holy Table, and give me to drink of the Wine of thy Kingdom. I am already as cut of the World; my life holds but
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by a weak string. O Gracious Lord, now let thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy word, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation, Amen.

CHAP. IX.

The Third Remedy against the fears of Death, is to consider, that God hath appointed the time, and the manner of our Death.

Either we are Hypocrites, who draw near unto God with our Lips, and honour him with our Tongues, whilst our Heart is far from him, *Matth. 14.* as we must desire the accomplishment of the Will of God, and resign our selves wholly to it, for every day we say to him in our Prayers, *Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven*; Therefore we cannot abhor, nor fly from Death so cowardly, if we be rightly perswaded as we ought, That God hath limited the Time, and appointed the manner of our Death. That which moves us from the most part to complain of this last Enemy, is a continual eye that we have fixed upon the Flesh, and its Power, and a too great confidence upon second causes. We are like the dog that bites at the stone that strikes him, for we commonly curse the means that God employs to call and withdraw us out of the World.

It will easily appear that God hath numbred our days, and that, by his wonderful and eternal Wisdom, he hath decreed the hour and moment of every mans death; for besides what our Saviour Christ saith in general, *That God hath reserv'd the Times and the Seasons in his own power, Acts 1.* Job tels us expressly, *The days of Man are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.*

pass, Job 14. The Royal Prophet speaks to the same purpose in the 31 Psalm, *I trusted in thee, O Lord, I said, Thou art my God, my times are in thy hand.* He is of the same judgement in the 39 Psalm, *Behold, thou hast assured me my days as an hand-breadth.* And in the 68 Psalm, *Unto God, the Lord, belong the issues of Death.* Moses teacheth us the same Lesson in his Divine Hymn, *Psal. 90.* for when he hath represented, how that it is God who reduceth Man to Ashes, and maketh him return to his first substance; he tels us, speaking unto God, *Thou turnest man to destruction, and saiest, return ye Children of Men.*

King *Hezekiah's* comparifon is very notable, he compares the Life of Man to a Thread that God hath twisted, and that he cuts off at his pleasure, *Isai. 38.* Mine Age is departed, and removed from me as a Shepherds Tent; I have cut off, like a Weaver, my life, he will cut me off with pining Sicknefs, from day even to night, wilt thou make an end of me. *Hannah, Samuels* Mother removes all difficulty, and confirms this Truth sufficiently, *2 Sam. 2.* It is God, saith she, who killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up; There is nothing more significant to the same purpose than our Lord and Saviours words, *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the Keys of Hell and of Death,* Apoc. This great God and Saviour closeth the Gates of the Grave when he pleaseth, and tis not possible to open them against his Will; In short, *Whether we live we live to the Lord, whether we dye we dye to the Lord, whether therefore we live or dye, we are the Lords,* Rom. 14.

And our Reason being enlightened with a Divine Revelation, teacheth us this good and profitable Lesson; for if God hath a hand in our Conception and Birth, and if he appoints the times of our entrance into the world, wherefore should not he also have an hand

in our Death, mark out the time of our last departure: *David* speaks thus to God, in the 139 Psalm, *My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the Earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy Book, all my Members were written, which in continuance, were fashioned, when as yet there is none of them.* We may therefore for the same reason, say to God, My substance will not be hid from thee, when this miserable Body shall fall to pieces, as rotten Wood, and as a Moth-eaten Garment; thine Eyes shall see me, when Death shall cut off the Thred of my Life, and separate what thou hast joyned together, so wonderfully thy Power and Wisdom shall have an hand in my last hours, and nothing shall happen to me, but that which thou hast afore ordained in these unsearchable Decrees.

If God appoints the time of our Resurrection, and if it be certain, that without his exprefs Commiſſion, the Holy Spirit will not breathe upon our dead bones, to cauſe them to revive; is it probable that the breath ſhould depart out of our Noſtrils, and our Bodies ſhould fall into the Bed of corruption, without the Orders of this great and living God? *Ezek. 37.* He hath appointed to the Sun its courſe, and to the Stars that ſhine in the Heavens, their ſeveral motions and ſtations, *Iſai. 40.* and ſhould not he alſo appoint to his Children their motions, ſeeing that they are to ſhine for ever in the Heaven of Heavens, where juſtice dwels, as ſo many immortal Stars? He hath meaſured the Waters in his hand; he hath compaſſed the Heavens with his Span; he hath weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills with a Ballance; he hath fashioned the Earth with a Hive, and given bounds to the roaring Sea; and is it poſſible that he hath not meaſured the time of our Life, and that he hath marked out with his finger the laſt moment? He who hath numbred the Kingdoms of Hea- then Princes, hath he not alſo numbred the days in the
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which he intends to reign in our hearts by his Holy Spirit? hath he not appointed the time for us to ascend up into the highest Heavens, where we are to reign with him in the Kingdom of his Glory?

If it be certain that God hath numbred the Hairs of our Head, *Matth.* 10. it is not to be doubted, but that he hath also numbred the days of our Life. And if a Sparrow doth not fall to the ground without his order, how can it be that a Soul should take its flight up to Heaven without his expresse Commission? He bottles up our Tears, he keeps a Record of all our afflictions, and takes an account of our Sorrows, *Psal.* 50. and can we imagine that he doth not keep an account of the life and death of Men, and that he minds not the time that we are to spend in this vally of Tears? He takes notice of our up-rising, and of our down-sitting, he compasseth thee round about whither thou dost stop or go, *Psal.* 59. and can it be conceiv'd, but that he observes thy rising at thy Birth, the several passages of thy Life, and thy going down at thy Death?

In short, if God hath appointed in his eternal Council, the continuance of the great World; he hath also, without doubt, limited the Life of Man, the little World, and the Image, and Compendium of the Great. As our Lord and Saviour teacheth us, Man is not able by his solicitous care to add one Cubit to his stature; and our experience sufficiently demonstrates, that we cannot add a year, a day, nor a moment, by all our labor and industry, to the continuance of our Life.

If Life and Death were not in Gods hand, there would be nothing settled, nor constant, neither in the Kingdoms of the World, nor in the Church of Christ. The Prophets would be often found in grievous errors, and the eternal Election would be totally abolish'd; for the most weighty affairs of a Commonwealth, depend upon the Life of Princes. The death of one Man is able to turn an Empire upside down, and to change
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the state of a Kingdom. If *Alexander* the Great had been stifled in his Cradle, what would become of the Propheſie of *Daniel*, who declares the glorious victories that this Prince ſhould obtain againſt King *Darius*, the Perſian Monarch, under the Emblem of an He-Goat that ſhould run at a Ram with all his might? that ſhould break his two horns, and trample him under his feet? And if King *Cyrus* had died before the obtaining of the Kingdom of *Babylon*, how ſhould *Iſaiah's* Propheſie be accompliſh'd? for he paints out his young Conqueror in his moſt lively Colours, and calls him by his name in this expreſſion, *I have ſaid of Cyrus, He is my ſhepherd, and ſhall perform all my pleaſure, even ſaying to Jeruſalem, Thou ſhalt be built, and to the Temple, Thy Temple ſhall be laid.* *Iſai.* 44.

If the Devil could have taken away *St. Paul's* Life, before his journey to *Damaſcus*, where he was ſtrangely converted by a Miracle, how could Gods immutable decree be accompliſh'd? for he had deſigned him from his Mothers Womb, to be a Noble Veſſel of his Grace and Mercy, and a faithful Ambaſſador of his Son, *Gal.* 1. If the good Thief had died before he had ſeen the Light, or if he had been kill'd in one of his Robberies, how could he have been converted upon the Croſs, where he Repented of his Crimes? Or how could he have heard from our Saviour theſe bleſſed and comfortable words, *Verily I ſay unto thee, Thou ſhalt be with me this day in Paradice?* *Luke* 31.

The Heathens have perceiv'd and underſtood this Truth, but they have darkened and defaced it by their impertinent and ridiculous Fictions; for their Poets tell us, that there are three *Parcæ*, or infernal Goddeſſes, the one holds Diſtaff and Spins, the other winds up the Thred, the third cuts it, and puts a period thereby to the Life of Man. By this Fable they intend to teach us, that God lengthens or ſhortens at his pleaſure Mans Life. As it is therefore certain, that God hath

numbred our days ; he hath also appointed, in his infinite wisdom, the means to convey us out of the world. If one dieth in Peace, another is kill'd in war ; If one departs in his Bed, another hangs upon a Gibbet ; If one perisheth by Famine, and another is stifled with the Plague ; If one is struck with the Thunder, and the other is torn in pieces by wild Beasts ; If one is choak'd in the waters, and the other perisheth in the Flames ; in short, if the separation of the Soul from the Body, happens in a different manner, it is not without the expresse Leave and Orders of our Heavenly Father : Therefore when we see the strangest accidents come to pass, and the most unexpected and tragick Deaths before our Eyes ; We must remember the saying of the Prophet *Jeremy*, when he saw the burning and plunder of *Jerusalem*, *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass when the Lord commandeth it not ? out of the mouth of the most high proceedeth not evil and good ?* Sam. 3. We must then consider with the Prophet *Isaiab*, That it is God that creates the Light and the Darkness, and that sends Prosperity and Adversity, *Isaiab* 15. 45. Or with *Amos*, who enquires whither *there be any evil in the City and the Lord hath not done it*, Amos 3. That is to say, that there is no Affliction, nor Death that happens, but God hath appointed it, and fore-ordain'd it by his wise providence. If the Devil cannot destroy *Job's* Flocks of Sheep, nor hurry headlong into the Sea the Herds of Swine without his leave, who holds him fast in Chains, *Matt.* 8. Let us perswade our selves, that all the powers of Hell and the World cannot cause us to dye by a violent Death, if God hath not ordain'd it before in the resolutions of his infinite Wisdom ; so that if at any time a Prince or a Magistrate speaks to us in *Pilat's* language to our Saviour, *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to save thee ?* John 19. Being strengthened with an Holy Confidence, Let us answer him as our Saviour ; *Thou shouldest not have*

have that power over me, were it not given to thee from above. Without the leave and pleasure of my God, thou canst not take from me an Hair of my Head.

We read in the Book of *Judges*, that when *Abimelech* assaulted the Tower of *Thebez*, with a resolution to win it; upon a suddain, a Woman cast from the top a piece of a Millstone, that fell upon his Head and broke his Scul, *Judg.* 9. If we look only upon the second Causes, this accident may appear to be strange, and unexpected; but we must lift up our Eyes to the Almighty hand of an al-seeing Power and Wisdom, far more dextrous than that of this poor Woman: for the same Relation declares, That God by this means brought to pass *Jotham's* Prophecy, and rendered the wickedness of *Abimelech*, which he did unto his Father, in slaying the seventy Brethren with his unmerciful hand, upon his own guilty head.

Ahab King of *Israel* was disguised, with a design to fight with the *Syrians*, *1 Kings* 22. An unknown Soldier lets fly by chance an Arrow out of his Bow, which struck him in the weakest part of his Armor, wounded him to death, and the Dogs lickt the Blood that gushed out of his Wounds: At this sight a carnal and an earthly Mind will say, That this was but a mischance of War, an unfortunate accident; But the Spirit of God informs us better, That this happen'd to fulfil the Prophecy of *Elias*, and the dreadful thearnings which he had pronounced against this wicked Prince, who labor'd by Tyrannical and devilish attempts, to invade other mens Possessions; Thus saith the Lord, in the place where Dogs lick'd the blood of *Naboth*, shall Dogs lick thy blood, even thine, *1 Kings* 21.

When we cast our eyes upon the Tragical death of *Josias*, King of *Juda*, at the first sight it appears, but the effect of the boiling fury of Youth, which carried him against all reason obstinately to fight with *Pharaoh Neco* King of *Egypt*; or of the strength and

swiftness of his Enemies according to the complaint of *Jeremiah* the Prophet, *Our persecutors are swifter than the Eagles of the Heaven, they purued us upon the Mountains, they laid wait for us in the Wilderness; The breath of our Nostrils, the anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits, of whom we said, under his shadow we will live among the Heathen, Lam. 4.* But to understand the Truth, we must enter farther into the Sanctuary, and adore the wisdom of Gods Decree, that had resolv'd to take away this good and religious Prince, into his Eternal Rest, and bestow upon him a more noble and a richer Crown, before he took in hand the sword of his vengeance, to punish the people of *Israel*, for the many Idolatries, and horrid Crimes, of which they had been guilty; By this means God fulfilled the Prophecy of *Husda, Behold, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy Grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place, 2 Kings 22.*

When we look upon the Death and Passion of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, we may imagine at the first view, that only the Pharisees envy, *Judas* s Treason, the mutiny of the rude Rabble, *Pilates* Injustice, *Herods* Jests, and the cruelty of the Roman Soldiery, were the causes of his Tragedy; but the Holy Apostles *Peter* and *John*, unto whom our Saviour had discover'd the rarest secrets of his Wisdom, consider these outward Agents but as the Instruments to bring Gods great design, Mans Redemption to pass. Therefore they speak of it in this manner, in the fourth of the *Acts*, *Against thine Holy Child, Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, to do whatsoever thine Hand and thy Counsel determined before to be done.*

If it happens by mischance, that a friend strikes another; for example, If in a wood where they are felling of it, the head of the Axe should slip out of the handle

handle, and kill the dearest friend of the Agent; there can be nothing imagin'd to be more casual, in regard of the second Causes, *Exod. 21*. But God declares in express terms, That he causeth such an one to happen under the hand of his friend that kill'd him against his will: To secure the innocent Author of the unexpected Murther, God appointed Cities of Refuge for such to fly to, *Numb. 35*.

As when the hour of our Death is come, all the Riches of the world cannot pay our Ransome; all the wisdom of the most prudent Councils, nor strength of a Kingdom, are not able to free us from the power of Death. On the contrary, when it pleaseth God to shelter and preserve our Life, all the subtilty and cunning of the Devil, all the power and fury of the world cannot take it from us.

Esau in his rage, full of vengeance and displeasure against his Brother, resolves to kill him; on purpose to accomplish this cruel design he goes to meet him with four hundred Men: But God who holds in his hand the hearts of all the Men of the World, God that dissolves the stony Rocks into Fountains of Water, and the Stones into Rivers of Oil, forced out of this hardened heart Tears of Compassion and Love. The same *Esau*, instead of drawing out his sword against his Brother, embraced him with expressions of kindness, kissed and wept over him.

Jacob's Sons had wickedly intended to destroy their Brother *Joseph*, they were ready to imbrue their cruel hands in the Blood of this innocent Lamb; but by a Secret and a most wonderful Providence, God stoppt their hellish design. This great and Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, who draws Light out of Darkness, made use of their most damnable malice and hatred, to accomplish his good purpose, and to raise his Servant to a considerable degree of Honour and Glory, which was prepared for him: These inhumane

Souls, full of envy and displeasure, did conspire together, how to hinder the fulfilling of *Joseph's* Dreams; but contrary to their intention they made way, and were instrumental to the accomplishment of that which God had revealed to his Prophet; Therefore when his Brethren were afraid lest he should revenge himself upon them, when he had power in his hand, he answered them with an heart full of Charity and Love, *Am I in the place of God? as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good*, Gen. 50.

David, a man after Gods own heart, fell into many fearful dangers, so that he was reduc'd oft times to the very Gates of Death; but God preserv'd his Soul from Death, his Eyes from Tears, and his Feet from Falling, *Psal. 116*. In the wilderness of *Mabon*, King *Saul* had surrounded him with his Men on every side, so that no help nor succour was to be expected from Man, *2 Sam. 23*. but by a wonderful Providence God deliver'd him; for when he was ready to be caught, a Messenger comes to inform *Saul*, *Make hast and come, for the Philistians are enter'd into thy Land*; So that neither the inhumane persecutions of this Tyrant, nor the abominable plotting of this unnatural Son, nor the Tumults and Revolts of his People, nor the most furious Tempests of Hell and the World, have ever been able to extinguish his Life before the time appointed; when he had spent all the days allotted to him by Gods good providence, he fell asleep as a Man that lays himself down to rest quietly, after a long and laborious Task.

Queen *Jezabel* was enraged against the Prophet *Elijah*, she had sworn by her gods, that he should surely be put to death; but by a miracle, God kept him out of the bloody hands of this incarnate Devil; and by another Miracle he preserved from Famine and Hunger, him whom he had before preserved from *Jezabel's* Sword and Fury; he sent the Ravens to feed him with Bread

Bread and Meat, morning and evening; and for his sake, God increas'd the Widow of *Sarepta's* Oil and Meal; when he was ready to be famish'd in the Wilderness, he dispatch'd an Angel to him, to carry him Meat and Drink: In short, all the storms that the Devil rais'd against him, could not destroy his Life; so that when God resolv'd to crown his Labors, he fetch'd him in a Chariot of Fire, and carried him up into Heaven.

The *Syrians* were resolv'd to take the Prophet *Elisha*, because that he discover'd the most secret Counsels, and frustrated all their designs, therefore they besieg'd the Town of *Dotan*, to seize upon this Man of God; When his Servant beheld the dreadful number of Horses and Chariots that surrounded that weak City, he cryed out in a fright, Alas, Master what shall we do? and he answered, Fear not, for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them, *2 Kings* 6. At these words of *Elisha*, the eyes of the poor Man were open'd, and he saw an innumerable company of Chariots of Fire, and Horses of Fire, that God had sent from Heaven, to guard his Servant the Prophet.

The *Jews* did often plot against our Saviour Christ, and attempt to kill him, *John* 10. They came so near to the execution of their bloody design, as to take up stones to cast at him, and knock him down, as to bring him to the sides of an high Mountain to throw him headlong, but he did always escape out of their hands, and pass'd through the midst of them without any harm: It was impossible for them to lay hands on him when they had undertaken and resolv'd it; The reason that the Spirit of God gives, is because *that his hour was not yet come*, *John* 7. 18.

The High Priest and the Saduces did burn with an enraged fury against the Holy Apostles, which caus'd them to lay hands on them, and to cast them into the publick Prisons. *Acts* 5. But because the time of their

Martyrdom appointed by God, was not yet come; he sent his Holy Angels to free them from their Chains, and to set them at liberty. When King Herod saw that the Jews thirsted for the blood of Gods Servants, the Apostles, *Acts 11.* and that they delighted in their execution, he cut off the head of *James*, afterwards he took *Peter*, clapt him in Prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of Soldiers, with intention to bring him to execution after the Feast of *Easter*; but the hour was not yet come, in the which this Holy Apostle was to be crucified, for the Glory of him who was crucified for his Salvation; therefore the night immediately before his designed execution, *Peter* was sleeping between two Soldiers, bound with two Chains, and the Keepers before the door; on a sudden a great Light shined in the Prison, and the Angel of the Lord came and smote him on the side, and raised him up, saying, *Arise up quickly*; and his Chains fell from his hands, and the Angel said unto him, *Gird thy self, and bind on thy Sandals*, and so he did; then he said unto him, *Cast thy Garment about thee, and follow me*; and he went out and followed him, and he knew not that it was true, which was done by the Angel, but thought he had seen a Vision; but when they were past the first and the second Ward, they came to the Iron Gate, that open'd of its own accord, and when they were passed through one street, the Angel departed immediately from him; Then *Peter* being come to himself, said, *Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his Angel, and hath deliver'd me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the People of the Jews.*

In short, the hour is not yet come which God hath mark'd out and appointed to take unto himself his faithful Servants; there is no miracle so great, but he will shew it for their sake; he drieth up the Seas, he stops the Lions Mouths, he denieth to the Fire its usual Heat, he keeps them alive in the midst of the Floods
and

and Flames, in the Whales Belly, in the fiery Furnaces, and in the deepest Gulphs.

If we did but examine the Memorials of our forefathers, and consider the things that we have seen with our Eyes, and experienced from our Infancy, we should find, that the means which God hath employed, and which he doth daily employ for our deliverance, are no less wonderful than those of former ages; God's Arm is not shortened, his Almighty Power is not lessened, he hath yet as much Authority as ever upon Men and Devils, and his Divine Providence is no less watchful for the preservation of such as fear and worship him; If we had the Eyes of the Soul as open as the Eyes of our Body, or if we could but perceive the things that are of themselves invisible, we should see that God looks upon us continually with the Eye of his Love, and of his Fatherly care, and that he covers us with his hand, as with a Buckler of proof, against all the Darts of the World and of Hell; We should see that we are encompassed about with a Wall of Fire, and that the Holy Angels do guard us on every side. We should then acknowledg, that it is God that holdeth our Soul in Life, and suffereth not our Feet to be moved, *Psal. 66.* And we should cry out, as *David* *O God, who is like unto thee? thou who hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the Earth; Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side, Psal. 71.*

Although this wholesom and most useful Doctrine, be plainly taught in Holy Writ, and sufficiently confirmed by so many examples out of the Word of God; some there are that oppose it with many needless objections.

In the first place they say, That God promiseth length of days to such Children as shall be obedient to their Fathers and Mothers; from whence they think to infer, that our Life hath no certain time limited, and

and that it is prolong'd or shortened, as we prove obedient or disobedient to God, and his Holy Laws; There is no difficulty to give an answer to this Objection:

That in the Language of the Holy Spirit, the word that signifies there *to prolong*, means not always to render a thing longer than it was, or should be, but only to make it of a long continuance; so that God doth not promise hear, that the Children who shall obey his Sacred Laws, shall enjoy a longer life, than otherwise it ought to be, but only that he will do them the favor to live long and happy in the World: We may prove this Exposition by *St. Pauls* words, who paraphrases this first Commandment of the second Table, in this manner, *Children obey your Fathers and Mothers in the Lord, for it is just; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the first Commandment, with promise, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the Earth*: This promise is to be understood with some exception; If God should judge it expedient for his Glory, and for the good of his Children; for there are many pious and obedient Children, who God withdraws out of the World, in the flower of their Age, to give them an happier life, which shall have no other limits than Eternity.

In the next place, they alledge the remarkable History of King *Hezekiah*, unto whom *Isaiab* was sent with this message; *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live*: Nevertheless God was intreated by his Prayers and Tears, and prevail'd upon to suffer him to live longer; therefore the Prophet told him, that God hath added fifteen years to his days. To this Objection I answer,

That according to the ordinary course of the World, and the disposition of the natural Causes, *Hezekiah* was to dye of that disease; for the Scripture saith expressly, *That Hezekiah was sick unto Death*; That is

to say, that this disease was Mortal, in regard of the second Causes, and the ordinary course of Nature; Therefore these words, *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live*, ought to be understood with this exception; Thou shalt dye if I don't deliver thee by a miracle, and if I don't employ mine Almighty Power to heal thee, and restore unto thee thy former health.

This may be also understood in another manner, Thou shalt dye if thou dost not repent and turn unto me with Prayers and Tears. In the same sence God caused it to be proclam'd in the streets of *Ninivy*, *within forty days Ninivy shall be destroyed*.

Let not any man conclude from hence, that *Hezekiah's* repentance was the cause of the lengthening of his days; and therefore that it was a casualty very uncertain. On the contrary, we may understand, that God who hath appointed by his Eternal Decree, that this Wise and Religious Prince, should live more than the disposition of his Body would suffer him, had also resolved to draw from his Heart Sighs and Groans, and Tears from his Eyes, for God knew all his Works from Eternity, *Acts* 1.

Others do argue against this Doctrine more impertinently; That if God hath numbred our days, and prescribed to our life its bounds, that it is in vain to take so much pain, and make so much ado about Bodies distemper'd with a sickness; and that it is to little purpose to administer any Remedy to them, or to pray for the recovery of their health. In like manner, such may affirm, that it is to no purpose to eat or drink, and to hinder the mad persons from casting themselves down a Precipice, or from swallowing poison, because they shall live neither more nor less, than God hath ordained from all Eternity. This Objection may seem very plausible at the first, although it be most absurd, and so foolish, that it must needs proceed from a great ignorance or malice; for it is not to be doubted, that when
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any doth aim at one end, he designs and supposes, by consequence to attain unto it, by the ordinary means. For example, God had appointed in his Eternal Council, to preserve *Jacob* and his Family, from that furious Famine, that rag'd the space of seven years; in order to that end, he sends *Joseph* into *Egypt*, to gather up Provision the seven years of plenty. *Isaiah* the Prophet had told *Hezekiah* from God, that he should live the space of fifteen years more, therefore he Commanded to apply, to this Prince's Sores and Boils a lump of dried Figs: God had promised to *David*, that he should be King over the House of *Israel*; to confirm this promise, he had been anointed with Oil by the Prophet *Samuel*. This promise don't hinder him from seeking the means to preserve himself from a *Sauls* unjust pursuance. And when *Nathan* tels him that God had decreed to establish his Posterity upon his Throne after him, this don't stop his Prayers, or cool his Devotion; on the contrary, it was that which did quicken him the more, and enflame his Soul with Love and Thankfulness to God; therefore he expresseth himself in this manner, *O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, thou hast revealed to thy Servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this Prayer unto thee, &c.* 2 Sam. 7.

Our Lord Jesus Christ knew for certain all that should happen to him; nevertheless we find him spending the days and the nights in Prayer, and when his life was in danger, he did not neglect the lawful and harmless means. He told his Apostles, *Are not two Sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father, but the very hairs of your head are all numbred.* This consideration hinders him, not from Commanding them, that when they are persecuted in one City, they should fly to another.

God had appointed to save *St. Pauls* life, and of all his company; therefore he revealed it to him by an Angel; nevertheless, when he saw the Mariners seek to escape, he told the Centurion, *If these dont stay in the Ship you cannot be saved*, Acts 27. In short, the Means and Causes are subordinate to the end, in such a manner, that it is meer folly and extravagancy to offer to divide them, or to suppose them to be contrary.

It is without reason, that some bring the History of King *Asa* against this undoubted Truth; Such affirm that this Prince was reprov'd for seeking to the Physicians in his sickness: These are the words of the Holy Scripture, *Asa in the thirty ninth year of his Reign, was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great; yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physitians*, 2 Chron. 1. The Spirit of God doth not blame this Prince, because he desired the assistance of Physicians; but because he did not seek help from God, nor did not implore his aid in the day of his distress. He that is sick, may as freely take Physick, as he that is well may eat and drink; I confess, we must not altogether repose our confidence and trust upon the Remedies, but rather upon God, who sends both sickness and health; As man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; so it is not the Physick alone that a Patient is cured of his distemper, but by the Blessing and Power of him who gives the wound, and binds it up; who strikes and heals when he pleaseth, *Job* 5. Therefore as we ought never to eat nor drink before we pray unto God to vouchsafe his Blessing upon our Meat and Drink, that he may grant to them the vertue of recruiting the decayed strength of our Bodies; likewise we should never take any Physick, without lifting our hands unto God for a blessing, that the Remedy may have the strength to expel our Disease. All Gods Creatures are
good

good, when they are received with thanksgiving, for they are sanctified by the Word of God and by Prayer, *1 Tim. 4.*

Take notice here, how much such persons are to be blamed, who when they lament for the loss of their friends or kindred, instead of looking up to Heaven, look down upon the Earth, and consider nothing but the inferior cause of their displeasure; instead of adoring and submitting with all humility, to the wise Providence of God, that disposeth of all worldly events, and appoints the meanest circumstances, they fret and murmur, they delight to nourish in their minds grief and displeasure, that consumes them, and break forth into many needless complaints, that serve but to open their wounds, and to render them more miserable; If he had not been in such a place, if he had not been engaged in such a way, if such a Physician had not been call'd, or if another had been sent for, if this or that had not been done, if this Physician had not been admistred to him, if less or more Blood had been taken from him, if he had been suffer'd to eat more meat, or if less had been given, my Brother or my Sister, my Wife, my Child, or my Husband, had been yet alive. It may be thou art mistaken *Friend*; the Disease could not be cur'd but by a Miracle, but when it should be otherwise, we must nevertheless lift up our Eyes to God, and acknowledg his finger with all reverence, for oft times he blinds the Physicians, so that they cannot understand the nature of the Disease, and suffers them to apply Remedies contrary to the distemper; As God threatens to take away the staff of Bread, that is to say, the nourishing strength and vertue of the Bread; *Levit. 26.* likewise he takes away his Blessing from the most Sovereign Remedies, and renders them altogether useles; it is thus with all the other accidents that happen to us, and that bring us to our Graves; for when it pleaseth him to remove any body out of the world,

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he suffers him to shut his eyes to all the light of Reason and prudence, and to cast himself away headlong into the most apparent danger; as when he designed to destroy *Absalom*, and to cut him off, he caused him to be led away by evil Council, and disappointed the discreet and prudent advice of *Achitophel*. Therefore, seeing that God hath appointed or fore-ordain'd before man's Creation, the time and manner of his Death, at what hour, in what place, and by what means soever God calls away our friends, or strikes at our persons, it is always our Duty to possess our Souls with patience, and not to suffer the least repining and despairing word to creep out of our mouths.

If Death suddainly snatcheth away thy dearest Children, or thy most intimate friends, complain not of its inhumanity. Remember that it doth put in execution the decrees of Gods everlasting Will, and that it carries with it a Commission sealed with the Signet of the living God. Adore therefore with all humility the supream Monarch of Heaven and Earth, and say to him, as *David*, with a profound submission, *Lord, I held my tongue and said nothing, because it was thy doing*, Psal. 39.

I don't wish thee to have an Heart of Flint, without natural affection; Piety and Religion are not barbarous, they don't deprive us of our Bowels; the affection that thou bearest to thy Children is not displeasing to the Father of Mercies, if it be but well govern'd, and don't exceed the natural bounds; It is lawful for thee to be sensible of their greifs, to weep for their distempers, and to pray for the recovery of their health; But when God hath dispos'd of them, and receiv'd them into his Eternal Rest, thou must stop all thy Sighs, wipe all thy Tears, and say as *David* did, after the death of his beloved Child, *We shall go to them, but they shall not come to us*. 2 Sam. 12.

Do they dye of a violent death? stop not thy consideration at the evil blasts that have carried them away, but lift up thy mind to the great God that draws these winds out of his Treasuries, and being arm'd with an Holy constancy, say with the patient *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken them away, blessed be the name of the Lord.* I am but a weak instrument which God hath employed to put them into the World; but he is their King, their Father, and their Creator; he is also their Saviour and Redeemer. Now it is both just and reasonable that God should dispose of his Subjects, of his Children, of his Workmanship, and of those whom he hath redeem'd with his precious blood.

The Master of a Family gathers at his pleasure the Flowers and the Fruits of his Garden; sometimes he cuts off the Buds, sometimes he suffers them to blossom; sometimes he gathers the green Fruit, sometimes he stays till it be ripe; and shall not Almighty God have the liberty to dispose, at his Will, of all that grows in his own Territories? The Master of the Family hath not created the Trees and the Plants that are at his Command, but God hath made and fashioned with his Almighty hand, all his Children, and all the Men of the World. Our Flowers whither and spoil in a moment, and our Fruits are soon rotten, and become unprofitable, notwithstanding all our care and skill to preserve them; But the Flowers that God cuts or pulls off, he transplants them in his Heavenly Garden, and gives them a perfect and a Divine Luster and Glory, that shall never fade; and the greenest fruits that he gathers, he preserves them for all Eternity in unspeakable sweetness.

Doth this Death draw near to threaten thy person, when it hath despatch'd thy dearest friends? be not frighted at its appearance, for it is not able to anticipate, not a moment, the hour appointed by the wisdom of Almighty God; and when that moment shall be
come

come, that he shall call thee to himself from Heaven, offer no resistance, and stop not thy Ears at thy Creators voice; say with the Prophet, *Samuel Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*, 1 Sam. 3. *Exod. 33.* O merciful God, seeing that thy Glorious-presence goes before me, I am ready to depart out of this crazy Tabernacle, and to quit this miserable wilderness, to enter into the Heavenly and happy *Canaan*; say with our Saviour, *Father, the hour is come, Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may Glorify thee*, John 17.

Hast thou lived many years upon Earth? ascribe not the cause to the constitution of thy Body, to the manner of thy Living, nor to the skill of thy Physicians; but remember that it is God that lengthens thy days, and come and humble at his feet thy Reverend gray Hairs, which the Holy Scripture styles, a Crown of Silver, or a Crown of Glory, *Prov. 16.*

Art thou threatened with Death in the Flower of thine age? Fret not thy self at it, and let not the least words proceed out of thy mouth, but what is seasoned with Salt of true Piety. Remember that it is God alone that cuts off the thread of thy Life, and puts a period to thy mortal Race; thou hast as much reason to be grieved, because thou art born too late, as to be sorry that thou diest too soon; Instead of spending thy self in useless complaints, which is, as if thou that art but an earthly Vessel newly formed, shouldest cast thy self against the Rock of Eternity; remember to adore and praise thy Great Creator, and return him hearty thanks, in that he is so well pleased to crown thee in the middle of thy Race, and so bountiful, as to bestow the Salary of the whole day upon thee, who hast labour'd but a few hours; he shews thee much favour to transplant thee before thou hast felt the heat of the day, and the Scorching of the Sun: Remember that it is the pleasant gale of his Divine Mercy, that drives thee so fast into the secure Haven

of Eternal happiness; think not therefore that Gods calling thee away in thy strength, is a testimony of his displeasure and hatred; for to hasten and render a person most happy, is no sign of ill will. It may be that God calls thee, because he hath found some good thing in thee, as in *Abija* the Son of *Feroboam*, King of *Israel*; because he loves thee dearly, and favours thee, he intends only to remove thee from the approaching evils, as he did *Josias*, one of the Holiest and most Religious Princes, that hath ever been; because thou dost walk before him, and seekest to please him, he will take thee up into his Holy and Heavenly Paradise, as he did *Enoch*, for fear that the temptations of the World should alter thy Religious disposition; and for fear that the Enemy of thy Salvation should prevail upon thee, by his continual and wicked suggestions, to leave the way of Righteousness, in which thou dost walk at present. As there are some rich Stuffs, whereof the Ashes are most precious, and others whereof the Cinders are good for nothing but to be cast away; Thus there are some happy gray Heads, where the rich and precious Relicks of Justice and Piety to shine, whereas others are only fit to discover the follies and vanity of our humane Nature: As there is some sort of Wine that grows better by old age, and preserves its strength until it comes to the Dregs; whereas other Wine there is, that soon becomes fower and useles; Likewise there are some Men, whom old Age makes better and wiser, so that they are like to the *Indian* Trees, that yield precious Perfumes and Frankincense, only when they begin to decline and wither: The old Age of such is most Honourable, and sends forth a most blessed perfume of Piety; whereas others do but corrupt with Age, and give out a most filthy stench; under a white Head they hide a black Soul and a wicked Conscience: In the decay of their
Age,

Age, the vices of their Mind gather strength and flourish. Instead of weeping for the sins of their youth, they add sin to sin, and are more hardened in evil. Old Age imprints more furrows and wrinkles in their malicious Hearts, than it doth upon their Foreheads. Neither Men nor their Lives are to be measured by a Yard or an Ell: We must not only consider how long we have liv'd, but how well we have liv'd, and employed the course of this Life; for there are some young Men, who have the Wisdom and Prudence of Gray Heads; and there are Gray Heads that become as weak as Infants; and some that scarce go out of that simple Age. The first are twice Children, the other continue always in their Childhood; Some young Men have perform'd such brave and Glorious Deeds, that one would judge by the passages of their Lives, that they have liv'd several Years or Ages: on the contrary, Some old and decrepid persons can scarce prove that they have been long in the World, unless it be by their Church Register, by their Gray Hairs, or by the great number of their wicked and abominable actions. This consideration causeth the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* to say, *that old age is not the most Reverend, that can shew a number of years, but wisdom is to be reckoned old Age amongst Men, and a Life without spot.* Ch. 4. It is certain he hath liv'd sufficiently, who hath learn'd to live well, and hath prepar'd himself to dye well. To what purpose should this miserable and languishing Life be lengthened a few days? Art thou afraid to be happy to soon? and fearest thou to see the end of thy Torments? doth the Traveler endeavour to lengthen out a painful and dangerous way? Doth the Workman grieve to have finish'd betimes his laborious Task? Doth the Soldier murmur because he comes off from his Watch and Guard? Miserable Man! What are all the years for which thou dost so impatiently afflict thy self, and vainly desire? for a day with God, is as

a thousand years, and a thousand years in his sight, are but as one day.

He that sails upon the Seas, admires the spacious extent of the waters, the difference of the rowling Waves, that mount up sometimes to the Clouds, and then fall down again into an Abyfs. And such as travel by Land, are delighted to see on one side deep Valleys, and on the other high Mountains that reach above the Clouds; but if God had but taken us up into the seat of his Glory, and that we should from that high Heaven, cast down our Eyes upon this base and unworthy Globe of the Sea and Land, to behold the proud and stately Mountains, with the most swelling Waves, they would appear unto us but an even Plain, or rather they would seem altogether very little. Thus when we compare the Men of the World, the one with the other, we shall find that some have lived long, and others but a little while; that some are old, others are young; but in respect of God, there is no difference between the young and the old; between an over-aged *Methuselah*, who lived Nine hundred threescore and nine years, *Gen. 3.* and a Child that hath only seen the Light of the Living; for the life of all Mankind is but a moment in comparison of Eternity.

If thou art ready to dye, for Righteousness, of a violent Death, meditate seriously upon the saying of the Prophet *David*, *Psa. 116. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* Arm thy self with an Holy confidence, and say with *Eli*, *1 Sam. 3. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* Imitate the generosity of *St. Paul*, *Acts 20.* and grave in thine heart these Divine expressions, *The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, That Bonds and Afflictions abide me, but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto my self, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus,*

to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. Remember always the Prayer that our Lord and Saviour offered up unto God in the greatest Agony ; *Father, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy Will be done.* Forget not also at this time Christs advertisment ; He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall save it to eternal life, *John 12.* O Great and Glorious Lord God, the Enemies of thy Truth and Glory are met together against thy dear Children whom thou hast sanctified by the blood of the Covenant ; but they are not able to do any thing but what thou hast appointed to be done in thine Eternal Wisdom.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the time of Death.

O Merciful Lord, who dost govern all things by thine infinite wisdom, and hast reserved the times and the seasons in thine own power, thou hast not only written my name in the Book of the living, but thou hast also measured the length of my life, and appointed the hour of my death ; Thou hast numbred my days, and prescribed to me my bounds, that I cannot pass beyond them. O Sovereign Lord of the World, that hast from all Eternity mark'd out with thy finger, the moment of my entrance into this life, and the time of my going out ; This miserable Body is but a crazy Tabernacle made up of Earth, subject to all manner of infirmities : Nevertheless, none is able to destroy it without thy Divine assistance ; the same hand that hath fashioned and formed it, must break it to pieces ; if a Sparrow falls not to the ground without thy leave, it is not possible that my soul should fly away into Heaven, without thy express Command. My God and Father, give me Grace, not to be of the number of such wretches as are in
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daily apprehensions of Death, but let me rest upon thee, who dost kill and give life, who dost cast into the Grave, and fetch him thence again. Let Satan and all the enemies of thy Glory plot against me what they can, they are not able to do any thing but what thy Wisdom hath ordained and appointed before the foundation of the world; Without thy leave and permission, they are not able to pluck an Hair from my Head, nor diminish a moment from the time that I am to live in this earthly Tabernacle. O Almighty and most merciful God, I recommend unto thee my Soul, as to my faithful Creator, and leave it wholly into thine hands; Here I am to accomplish thy Will, and to submit my self to thy pleasure, without any resistance; whether this Soul which thou hast created after thy likeness, and which is an Image of thy Divinity, remain in this Body, that I may be able to serve thee on Earth, or whether thou dost call for it, and take it up into Heaven, that it may glorify thee in the company of thy Saints, and of thy blessed and Glorious Angels, Amen.

A Paayer and Meditation upon the manner of our Death.

O God the Creator of all flesh, and Father of the immortal Spirits, I know that all manner of Deaths of thy Children are precious in thy sight; and that howsoever they shall happen, thou wilt take care of my Soul; when I consider all things, I find that it matters not, whether my Soul gets out by my Lips, or by a wound, so that it enters into thy Glory to enjoy thine Eternal Happiness; What difference is there? if my Lamp goes out of its own accord, or if it be blown out by some envious blast, so that it be lighted again by the immortal beams of the Son of Righteousness, and continue, for ever, Glorious in the highest Heavens. I shall be sufficiently happy if I dye in the

Lord,

Lord, and enter into mine Eternal Rest, from all my Labours, in what manner soever Death assaults me, from all Eternity. O Lord, thou knowest all thy works, and with a glance of thine Eye, thou discoverest the depths, and seest the bottom of Eternity. As thou hast marked out and appointed the moment of my Death, thou hast also ordained the manner of it. I must ~ Al mighty God, repose myself upon this wonderful and wise Providence, and be contented with thy uncontroulable Decrees: but O my God and Heavenly Father, if thou wilt give me the liberty, who am but Dust and Ashes, to speak unto thee, and to send up the thoughts of my Heart; I beseech thee to be so Gracious as to let me know my end, that I may not be surprized on a sudden by an unexpected death, as Job's Children; and so merciful as to give me timely notice of my departure, as thou didst to thy servant Hezekiah. I desire not the notice of many years, but of a few days, or at least of a few hours immediately before, that my Soul may not be disturb'd with evil thoughts, or frighted with false conceits, and malicious suggestions of the Devil; but that I may end my days with all tranquility and satisfaction of mind: that I may always have a perfect use of my senses, of my reason and understanding, and a certain perswasion of thy Grace and Favour; that I may glorify thy name, and edify my acquaintances, untill the last moment of my departure. Suffer not therefore my Soul to be snatch'd away by force on a suddain, but that I may have time to commit it into thy merciful hands, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for one that dies
in a strange Countrey, in the midst
of Infidels.

O My God and Heavenly Father, how painful and grievous is this trial? who can express the troubles of my mind? at the moment of my most urgent necessity, and

of all troubles of my mind, at the time of my Agony, I see my self destitute of all humane assistance. Here I am at a distance, not only from my natural soil and fare, from the pleasant company of my friends, and deprived of all spiritual Comfort, of which I have at present greatest need in my extremity, but also, to my unspeakable grief, here I am in a barbarous Countrey, in the hands of my most inhumane and unreconcilable Enemies; I have nobody to comfort and rejoyce me, nor to strengthen me in the faith of my Saviour Christ; all things that appear before me, do increase and add to my trouble; I am here among the Enemies of the Truth, who labour to destroy my interest in Christ, and to cause me to perish, now that I am entering into the Haven of Eternity. I must encounter with Death, with Hell it self, and with the subtil insinuations of the infernal Spirits. O Almighty and merciful Lord, suffer me not to lose courage and to yield to the present temptation. By thy wonderful Providence, and out of the Treasuries of thy Mercy, supply all my wants and infirmities, and grant that I may with the Shield of faith, quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil. I am beset with many visible and invisible Enemies, but they that are for me, are more in number than they that are against me: It is true, I am far from my Native Countrey, but I am not one jot farther from Heaven, whereof the Earth is the Center; I am at a distance from all my Earthly friends, but nothing can put me at a distance from thee; O good God, who lovest me with unchangable affection; I am in the imbraces of mine Heavenly Father, and of my God, I have not the comfort of a Minister to assist and help me in my grief and pain, but I know that thou wilt send to me thine Holy Angels, as once to thy beloved Son in his bitter Agony; These Angels shall protect me against all the power of the Prince of darkness; Thou wilt administer unto me thy self, the sweet comforts of thy Salvation; thy Rod and thy Staff will assist me in this Valley and Shadow of Death. O Lord, thou dost things that are not to be searched out,
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and so many wonders, that it is not possible to number them, Thy Grace is sufficient for me, and thy power is made manifest in mine infirmities; thine Holy Spirit, who is the true comforter, and the great Power of the Almighty, shall refresh me in these my afflictions, and in all things shall make me more than Conqueror: Thou art stronger than all other beings, so that I am perswaded, nothing can ravish me out of thine hands; I am certain, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can separate me from the love that thou hast declared to me in Jesus Christ my Lord; This precious faith with which thou hast enabled my Soul, shall vanquish the World, triumph over Hell, and destroy Death in its own Empire, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the death
of a beloved Person.

O My God, I acknowledg that there is nothing certain nor unchangeable on Earth, but thy precious and Holy Promises, therefore it becomes us to enjoy the things of the World, as not enjoying them; Thou hast snatch'd out of my embraces, and pull'd from my bosom my greatest Darling, and most intimate friend; by this means thou hast open'd my Heart, and torn my Bowels, thou hast separated me from my self, so that my life is but a burden and a pain to me; I did often look upon this pleasant object of my love, as a gift from above, and a mark of thy favour and liberality; It was my greatest joy and my sweetest comfort. The day that it took away, loaded me with sorrows, and overwhelmed me in a Sea of grief: That which doth most disturb me, is, That I am afraid, that this is a stroke and an affect of thine anger and justice. Lord my God, I must needs acknowledg, that I have grievously offended thee, seeing thou dost thus chastise me with so much severity, and
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makest me to feel so sharp an affliction; I am unworthy of all thy favours, seeing thou dost take from me such a precious jewel which was shewn to me as a Lightning. I am afraid to have been wanting in my Duty, and that this death that kills me, is the effect of my stupidity and blindness: Methinks I could have hinder'd this doleful accident, for if I had behaved my self otherwise than I have done, my Life and Soul should not be now in its Grave. O God of all comfort, pardon my excessive grief, pacify my sighs, stop the currant of my Tears, remove all these vain displeasures that consume me, deliver my Soul from this unmerciful grief and torment that it suffers, and from these troubles that are more than humane, instead of looking to these inferior Causes, and to the circumstances of the death of this person, that I did love as mine own Soul; give me grace to remember, that the least things as well as the greatest, are govern'd and rul'd by thy wise providence, and that the good and the evil proceed from thy Divine appointment. Give me Grace to consider, that thou dost hold in thine Almighty hand, the Keys of Life and Death, and that thou alone dost cast us into the Grave, and lift us up from thence again. Thou, O Sovereign Monarch of the Universal World, who dost not only let death loose, but dost also appoint all the means to take us out of the World; make me truly submissive unto thy Sacred Pleasure, and to put the Finger upon my Lips, because it is my doing; If I open them, let it be to adore thy Justice, and sing forth thy Praises; the person for whom I lament so much, was nearly related to me, like another my self, but it was also thy Creature, thy Child, and a Member of our Saviours mystical Body. We for our parts beleive, to have the right of disposing of our Workmanship, and of that which we have bought with our Money; and hast not thou, O God, the liberty to dispose of that which thou hast created after thy likeness? bought, not with corruptible things, as with Gold and Silver, but by the Precious Blood of the Lamb, without spot or blemish. Thou
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hadst a Son who is the brightness of thy Glory, and the express image of thy person, whom thou hast not spared for me; and shall I Lord refuse thee my Heart and my Bowels? Thy only begotten Son came down upon Earth to suffer the most cruel and ignominious Death of the Cross, but thou hast taken up into Heaven the person whom my soul did love, to crown it with glorious and ever happy Immortality; Shall his or her Felicity be the cause of my Misery? and that his or her Rest occasion my displeasure? It is the property of true love to prefer the happiness of the beloved Persons, to our own satisfactions; Therefore our Saviour told his Apostles, If you did love me, you would rejoyce, because I go to my Father, for my Father is greater than I. Between thee, O great and living God, and us miserable Worms of the Earth, there is as vast difference, as there is between the innocent and harmless delights of this world, and the unspeakable pleasures of thy presence; for these are but as drops of Water, that are dried up with the least wind, whereas the satisfactions of Heaven are like a bottomless Sea of Delights, in which we shall swim for ever. Do I therefore weep for him or for her, whose tears thou hast wip'd away? Do I wear a mourning Apparel, and a black Scarf, for him who is now cover'd with a Glorious Attire of Joy and Gladness, and who is adorned with an Habit as white as Snow? Do I delight my self in darkness, and doth he solace himself at the Fountain of Light and Glory? Do I seek a solitary and melancholly Retreat, and doth he rejoyce amongst the thousands of Angels, and the Glorious company of Immortal Spirits? I sigh and groan, and he sings a new song, the song of the Blessing, which is always in his mouth. All my complaint and groanings cannot bring him back upon Earth; but if that were possible, it is not just to attempt it; my kindness would be cruel, and my love most inhumane: How could I resolve to make him leave the Haven of Eternal Felicity, to expose him again to the furious Waves and Storms of this troublesome Sea of the World? How can I have the heart to
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pull him down from his Triumphant Chariot, and from the magnificent Throne, unto which thou hast raised him, to engage him in new and fresh encounters, and to bind him again with a chain of misery; how could I pluck off from him the Habits of Light and Glory, to cloath him with darkness, and cover him with our infirmities? Is it possible that I should be so inhumane to draw him out of Rivers of pleasures, to cast him again into a Sea of Gaul and Bitterness? to take from him the Bread of thine Heavenly Kingdom, and the Fruits of the Tree of Life, to give him the Bread of affliction, and the Apples of Sorrow and Grief? Can I be so cruel to pluck him from thy bosom, from the Breasts of thy most tender favours, and from that fulness of Joy, which he hath in the sight of thy Countenance, to make him languish in our embraces, swallow the poison of this miserable Life, and groan under the burden of our mortal afflictions? In short, can I be so senseless, as to remove him out of that Eternal Life, to cause him to become again the sport of Death? He is pass'd from Death to Life, is it my desire that he should return back from Life, into the merciless hands of Death? we shall go to him, but he cannot come to us; seeing that this life is so short, that it is spent and gone as a thought, we shall see one another shortly in the light of the Living. O Lord, how wonderful art thou in thy Works? how Magnificent in the means that thou employest? and how various is thy Wisdom in all things; I see that what thou hast done, is not only for thy Glory, and for the advantage of this happy Creature that thou hast received into thy Rest; but it is also for my happiness, and the instruction of my neighbors; for in taking from me my most dearly Beloved, my Joy, my Pleasure, and my Hopes, thou hast put my Obedience and Faith to a Tryal. As thou didst heretofore try the Father of the faithful, in requiring from him his only Son Isaac, in whom thou hast promised to bless all the Nations of the World: I confess, good Lord, to the praise of thy Grace and Goodness, that my tryal is less than his; for thou didst com-
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mand Abraham to sacrifice his Son with his own hands, to spill his Blood in thy presence, and to reduce his Body into Ashes; but thou requirest of me no other Sacrifice, but that of my Obedience, and of my Submission to thy Holy Will. Thou wilt have me say with good Heli, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good; or with thy Servant Job, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Thou hast pluckt out that strong root that did tye me to this Earth, and hast cut the pleasant string that did bind me so fast to the world, that thou mightest transplant my heart in Heaven, and lift up my affections to the things above. A part of my self, which I look upon as my Treasure, is already with thee, and the wing of Divine Love that enflames me, carries me thither also at every moment; Instead of continuing in my Sighs, Groans, and Tears, for him, or for her that I loved with all the affections and tenderness that I am capable of, Give me Grace to employ my self in preparing to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle; Enable me to imitate the Piety, Zeal, Faith, and Constancy and all the other Noble Vertues of those whom thou hast received into thine Eternal Rest, and crowned with Glory. Let me dye the death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his, Amen.

CHAP. X.

*The fourth Remedy against the fears of Death,
to separate our Hearts from the World.*

THe Children of Israel did leave the Wilderness with a ready mind, and went joyfully over the River of Jordan, when God Commanded them so to do. The cause of this their readiness, was an earnest longing for the Land of Canaan, and their unsettled

settled condition in the Wilderness, having nothing but Tents to live in. Death is to us the same, in regard of our Heavenly Paradise, as the River of *Jordan* was to the Children of *Israel*, in the respect of promised Land; Therefore from hence it appears, that the best means of obliging our selves to a resolution of entering into this passage willingly, is to free our selves from all those things which might incumber, or stop or tye us to the World, and to keep our selves always in a readiness to depart.

For that purpose it is not necessary that we should go out of the World, but that the World should be banished, and driven out of us, and that we should renounce all the vanities and unruly affections, so that we may be able to speak with the Apostle, *The world is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the world*; for there be many who depart out of the World, but leave there their Hearts and most tender Affections; as *Lot's* Wife that went out of *Sodom*, but left therewith her Treasures and Delights, her most earnest desires; as the *Israelites*, who when they went out of *Egypt*, left behind them their cursed affections, with their pots of *Flesh* and *Onions*.

The same thing happens to many, who separate themselves without any necessity, from the acquaintance of Mankind, and who affect a strange and austere kind of Life; They leave the society of wise and vertuous persons, and the lawful use of the Blessings which Heaven hath vouchsafed to them; and they deprive themselves of all that deserves our esteem, and the means of glorifying God, and edifying our neighbours: but many times they carry with them their Corruptions, their Vices, and a legion of wicked Thoughts and carnal Desires; By this means they give place to the Devil, and expose themselves to all his temptations; for that wicked Serpent delights himself rather in the Dens of Wild Beasts, and in the Caves of the Earth, than
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in the Palaces and Dwellings of Princes and Kings. The most horrid and abominable Vices creep, and breed rather in the Desarts, and places of Retreat, than in Publick, and in the great Cities that are full of Inhabitants. *Lot* remain'd chaste in the most execrable City that was in the World; but when he went aside to the foot of a Mountain, and into a Cave to dwell, he defiled himself with a monstrous Incest: When *Satan* intended to tempt our Saviour Christ, he carried him into a Desert, and to the top of a Mountain. From hence we may gather, that this subtil Enemy of Mankind hath learnt by his long experience, that the places of Retreat and the most solitary, are the fittest for to lay his snare. If our Saviour, who was wholly innocent, and free from Sin, hath been able to overcome all manner of Temptations; we are not of the same temper, we are not furnished with such Armor as he was, of Proof, against all the enflamed Darts of the Devil; for our miserable Flesh delights in its own destruction; it opens the Ears and the Heart wide, to the deceitful promises of *Satan*, and suffers it self to be cheated by his damnable Enchantments; It flatters us, and causeth us to be lull'd asleep in its bosom, then, like a treacherous *Dalilah*, it betrays us into the unmerciful hands of our great Enemy.

Some cloath themselves with Hair, and wear at their Girdle a knotted Cord, whom the Devil drags to Hell with the invisible Chains of Lust; Others climb up to the top of frozen Mountains, and yet their Hearts do burn with impure Flames; Some fret themselves in a mournful solitariness, whose desires and longings are for the world and its vanities: Others have their hands lifted up to Heaven, whose mind is enslaved to the Earth, and rooted in the rotten and filthy pleasures of the Times; Some have a Lamp burning before them, whose understanding is wrapt in gross darkness, more palpable than that of *Egypt*: Others have
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an empty Stomach, whose Soul is full of abominable Passions. In short, Some live in appearance like Angels, and yet they are possessed by legions of infernal Spirits: Others seem to have no concernment in the World, and yet lodge the whole World in their Hearts.

Under a coarse Habit, there dwells oftentimes more Envy, more Vanity and Ambition, than under the glorious attire of Silk and Gold: Through a torn cloathing some Souls may be perceived swell'd with Pride and Arrogancy; and in the company of Beggars, are to be found many times the Designs of Kings, and the lofty thoughts of the greatest Monarchs: To speak plainly, the good things and advantages of this life, don't stop and wed us, of themselves, to this World, but rather that Love and Affection which we bear to them; for without doubt, there be many that are more earnest and affectionate for the thing that they want, than others that enjoy them: Some poor people have a far greater longing for Riches, than ever *Solomon* had in the midst of all his great Treasures: Some silly Women that are covered with old Rags, and some contemptible *Joans* have more Vanity and pride in their Brains, than ever had Queen *Esther*, in her Richest and most Glorious Attire. The Prophet *Daniel* was rais'd to an high and eminent Honour, for he was the Governor of the third part of the Monarchy of the Persians, and of the Medes; nevertheless, he was no more concerned in *Babylon*, than if he had had their but a Sepulchre, and worn the Chains of a Slave; he sends forth as many Sighs, and pours as many Tears, as if he had been lying upon the Ashes of *Jerusalem*.

Some pittiful Beggars, are more loath to quit their Rags, than the Sovereign Princes, to lay down the Ensigns of their Dignity and Honour: Such are more enslav'd to their filth and baseness, than the greatest Monarchs to the Glory and Splendor of their Empire. Death labors as much to free a man from his Prison, and

to take him out of his Dungeon, as to drive him out of his Palace, and to tumble him from his Throne ; The Poor and the Indigent, who have no other Bed to lye upon than the hard ground, doth make as much resistance, as the Rich, who are stretched upon the softest Couches : The Galley-slaves are as unwilling that Death should loose them from their Chains, and take them out of their misery, as the Kings and Princes are to leave their Scepters and their Crowns. I am fully perswaded that *David* was more willing to go from his Command, and from his Riches, than many poor wretches are to depart from their Dunghills and their meanness. Some persons are tormented with the Gout, the Stone, and other grievous and sensible pains ; they desire nevertheless, more passionately, to live, than many that enjoy a perfect and a flourishing Health. Carnal and Earthly Souls, are so much bound to the Earth, that they feel an horrid reluctancy, and an unspeakable displeasure, when they are to depart from a Body, rotten, and falling to pieces with old Age ; whereas others that are more spiritualiz'd, and that have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and of the powers of the World to come, depart most willingly out of young and lusty Bodies, flourishing in their Strength and Beauty.

We must not therefore remove out of the world our Legs and Arms, but our affections and vain Lusts ; If God bestows upon us his Earthly Blessings, we are not to follow the example of that extravagant Philosopher, who cast into the Sea his Silver and his precious Stones, that he might not have the trouble to keep them ; and who lost them willingly, that he might not be in any further danger of losing them afterwards ; but we must take heed, that they cause not our Faith to make Shipwrack, and that we regard them not more than our Consciences ; for the Soul is a far more precious Jewel, than the Body, and Life, far

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more considerable than Cloathing. Seeing that God bestows upon us so many good things, with an intent that we should enjoy them; we should shew our selves unthankful to his goodness, contrary to his wise Providence, and unjust and cruel to our selves, to refuse the means of ever using and employing these Blessings. All Gods creatures are good, and none are to be rejected, so that we take them with thanksgiving, for they are sanctified by the word of God, and by Prayer.

The Honours and Riches that we receive from our Birth, or that we obtain by lawful and just means, are to be rank'd amongst the Blessings of God; therefore *Esther* who was but a poor stranger, received with joy as a favour from Heaven, the Imperial Crown that was put upon her Head, and she refused not to be the Wife of the greatest Monarch at that time. *Joseph* accepted willingly the power and dignity with which King *Pharaoh* had invested him; and the Prophet *Daniel* did not only receive the honourable Commands which were bestowed upon him by the King of *Babylon*, but he employed his Power and Credit, to raise also his Companions to the places of Trust, and to the Government of that Empire. God doth sometimes give the Scepters into the hands of cruel and prophane persons, such as was *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Nabuchrddnazar*, *Belshazar*, and *Herod*, to teach us, that it is not the chief good of Man, and that we must aim at a more excellent Kingdom, and at more solid and constant Felicities. He doth also place upon the Throne, Men according to his own heart, whom he cherisheth as the Apple of his Eye; as *David*, *Solomon*, *Jehosaphat*, *H Ezekiah*, and *Josias*, to teach us, that the fear of God, and the expectation of an immortal Crown, is not inconsistent with the Honours of this Life, nor with worldly Glory; For true Piety hath the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.

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The Riches of the Earth are no more hurtful than the Honours and Dignities, unless it be by accident; they are very useful and advantageous to such as employ them well, and that dispose of them with an Holy discretion; They are powerful helps to true Piety, and excellent means to glorify God, and to exercise our Mercy and Compassion; I may say that they give a Lust to the Zeal and Charity of Gods Children. Riches turn into evils, and are ill bestowed in the hand of a Brute, and sordid *Nabal* at the disposition of a merciless and voluptuous Glutton, as the rich Man of the Gospel, of a perfidious and treacherous *Judas*, of a silly and debauch'd Youth, as the prodigal Son; but they are the Blessings of Heaven, when they happen in the hand of a *Joseph*, who nourished therewith his Father and all his kindred; in the hands of a *David*, that employed them in offerings to Almighty God in the sight of his people; of a *Solomon*, who built a magnificent Temple; and of a *Mary Magdalen*, who spent them not in Luxury and Vanity, nor in curious Trinkets, but to buy a box full of precious Ointment, which she poured on the head of the Saviour of the World. They are blessings indeed, when such an one enjoys them, as *Cornelius* the Centurion, who employed them in Almes, whereof the perfume ascended up to the Throne of the God of Mercies. In short, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Eternal Wisdom of his Father, hath uttered out of his Sacred mouth, that *It is more blessed to give than to receive*, Acts 20.

I am not ignorant of the Oracle pronounced by this Great God and Saviour, *That whosoever doth not renounce Father, Mother, Houses and Lands for my sake is not worthy of me*. Mat. 10. This was said, to teach us that we must renounce with Heart and Affection, all things in the World, and of this present Life, and that we must be always ready to abandon all, in case we cannot keep them without offending God, and gi-

ving a scandal to his Church; but without such absolute necessity, God doth not require from us in any place of Scripture, actually to quit and leave our worldly Possessions.

I know also very well, that when a young man did enquire from our Saviour, *What he was to do to inherit Eternal life*, Luke 18. This wise Teacher return'd him this answer, *Sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have Riches in Heaven, then come and follow me*, Luk 18. This was a perticular Commandment made only to that man, upon a singular occasion, from whence it is not possible that we should gather any conclusion to ablige others to the same action; for otherwise this might oblige all Christians in general to sell what they have without exception, and to give it to the poor: The Commandment was given upon this occasion, This vain glorious Pharisee did boast of having kept all the Commandments of God from his youth up. To remove this good opinion of himself out of his mind, and to give a vent to the swelling of his Pharisaical Pride, our Lord puts him to a Trial, enjoyning him to sell all his Goods and to give them to the poor. At these words the poor young man went away very sad, in a confusion, because he had much Riches, and his Heart and greatest affections were with his Treasures. By this proceeding he discovered that he was far from loving God with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Strength, because that it did appear, that he did love his worldly possessions more than Christ and his Blessedness. You may therefore understand without difficulty, devout Souls, that this Commandment that was made to this young man, extends not to all in general; If it had been otherwise, the Holy Apostles who were mindful of every thing that did tend to perfection, would not have rested satisfied with the loss of their Goods, to follow Christ, as they declared to him themselves, *We have left all,*
and

and have followed thee, Matth. 19. But they would have totally quitted all their enjoyments, and would have reserved nothing for themselves, which they did not : for *St. John*, Christs beloved Disciple, had a Dwelling House, where he entertain'd the Holy Virgin, after our Saviours death, *John* 19. And the other Apostles had their Ships, their Nets and Tackling, therefore after Christs Resurrection, they returned to their Fishing Trade.

Our Saviour, upon this occasion of the young mans refusing to obey this express and perticular Command of *selling his goods, and giving them to the poor*, enforms his Disciples, *That it is hard for a Rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. But he explains in another place this passage in such a manner, that he leaves not the least difficulty in it ; when he saith, That it is hard for them who put their confidence in Riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God, *Mat.* 19. By this we may understand, that he speaks not of all rich Men in general, but of such only who put their trust in their Riches ; therefore the Apostle *St. Paul* don't command the rich Men to cast away their Estates and Goods ; but he advises them not to put their confidence in them, so as to become more vain and prouder. In this manner he speaks to *Timothy*, *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6.

Here are therefore the best directions, according to my judgment, for a true Christian who desires to be acceptable to God, to attain to the dispositions necessary for an happy Death.

First, we must employ our most assidual and earnest endeavours and affections, for the Eternal advantages of the Soul, and of the Life to come ; we must thirst impatiently for the Graces of God, and for the Gifts of his Holy Spirit ; we must sigh and long for the spi-

ritual Riches of the Soul, and labour with all our strength to attain to the uncorruptible Crown, and the immortal Glory of Heaven. Christ gives us this Holy and safe advise, *Seek, saith he, first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you, Mat. 6.* And elsewhere, *Labour not for the Meat which perisheth, but for that Meat which endureth unto everlasting life, John 6.*

2. As the good King *Solomon* built first the Lord's House, and then laid the foundation of his own Palace. Thus we ought to proceed to labour first for the advancement of God's Kingdom, and the edification of his Church, then we may have liberty to employ our selves about the affairs of this present life, and about our worldly concerns; but our Employment and Calling, must be just, and allowed by the Laws of God and of Man; for he that gains Riches by unlawful Arts, is but a Thief and a Robber.

3. Before we engage in any work, we must pray to God to vouchsafe his Blessing to it, and speak to him as *Moses*, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands upon us, yea the work of our hands, establish thou it, Psal. 90.* for without his assistance and Blessing, all our labours will be in vain, and to little purpose. It is God that makes poor and makes rich, that lifts up and abaseth, *1 Sam. 2.* *Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase, 1 Cor. 3.* The Royal Prophet is of the same judgment, when he saith, *If the Lord buildeth not the City, their labour is but lost that build it.*

4. Our Labours must be without murmurings, and mistrusting God's Providence, we must banish out of our minds, all idle thoughts and groundless expectations that disturb us, *Psal. 107.* We must pluck out of our hearts all the cares and displeasures that trouble us. We must imprint in our minds that excellent Sentence

rence of David, *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee*, Psal. 5. and that of St. Peter, *Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. 5. We must remember our Saviours charge, *Take heed to your selves, least at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life*, Luk. 21.

5. Above all things we must beware of the slavish vice of Covetousness, that denies God's good Providence, and his fatherly Care; To that purpose St. Paul exhorts us in exprefs words, *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, Heb. 13. That he might beget in us an aversion of this infamous vice, St. Paul tells us, *They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in destruction and perdition*, 1 Tim. 6. He adds next, *For the love of Money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*. Colof. 3. The same Apostle declares, *That Covetousness is Idolatry, and that it shall never inherit the Kingdom of God*, Eph. 5. Therefore we ought to follow the wise King's advice, *Labour not to be rich, but forbear from any such design*, Prov. 25.

6. If God is pleased to afflict us with poverty, and to cast us down in the Dust of a mean Estate, notwithstanding our continual labours in a lawful Calling; Let us endeavour to possess our Souls with patience: Look upon Christ our Saviour, who for our sakes became poor, although he was rich, that he might be enriched with his poverty; Let us beseech him to grant us the blessed disposition of St. Paul, that we may be able to speak as he did, *I have learned to be content in whatsoever estate I am, I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound every where, and in all things; I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need, I can do all things through Christ, which*

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strengtheneth me, Phil. 4. Remember, Christian Souls, to settle your Treasure in Heaven, where neither the Moth nor Rust can corrupt, and where Thieves cannot break through and steal; Labour to be rich in Faith, and in good Works, that you may inherit the Kingdom that God hath promised to them that love him.

7. But if it hath pleased God to bless thy labours, and if his powerful and liberal hand hath raised thee up to great Honour, so that thou enjoyest Riches in abundance, thou must remember to possess them in such a manner, that they may not enslave thee: and according to *St. Pauls* advise, thou must remember to enjoy them, as if thou enjoyest them not, and that the fashion of this World passeth away; we must not trust upon them, nor pride in them; we ought to glory in something else, as God himself exhorts us, Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom, nor the strong of his strength, Let not the rich man glory in his Riches, but he that glories, let him Glory in that he hath understanding, and knows me, *Jer. 9.*

8. We must not only take off our hearts and affections from the world and its vanities, trample upon them, and esteem them like Dung, in comparison of the unspeakable Treasures of Heaven; but we must also be ready to leave them at every moment, as so many trifles, vain, and perishable things; as we are to possess them without displeasure and fear, so we must part with them without grief and murmuring. When we should lose in a day all that God hath bestowed upon us in the world, it becomes us to strengthen our selves with an Holy confidence and resolution, saying with *Job, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord, Job 1.*

9. If we happen to part with our Goods, Honours and Dignities in the Service of God, and for the profession of Christs Gospel; in such a case, we ought to endure the loss with a Christian patience and an excessive

cessive joy, because that such a loss for a just cause, will prove at last to our advantage and glory. This was the practice of the faithful Hebrews, of whom St. Paul renders this testimony, *You have received with joy the spoiling of your Goods, knowing that you have in Heaven a better and a more lasting inheritance*, Heb. 10. Christan Souls, represent unto your selves the example of the Prophet Moses, who esteem'd the reproach of Christ greater riches, than the Treasures of Egypt, for he had a respect unto the recompense of the reward, Heb. 11.

10. Whilst we enjoy our Goods, we must take care of the poor, and be bountiful in Alms, and to speak in St. Paul's language, Whilst we have any time, let us do good, especially to the household of faith, Gal. 6. Whoever hath compassion of the poor, makes God his debtor, he will assuredly return him his good Deed, Prov. 9. Our Saviour promiseth to recompense a Cup of cold water, that shall be given to the meanest of such as believe in his name, Matt. 10. Alms is a Seed that is cast upon Earth, but its Flowers and most excellent Fruits are to be gather'd in Heaven; He that sows liberally shall reap liberally: It is not therefore as that other Seed, mentioned, Psal. 126. That they that sow in Tears, shall reap with Songs of Triumph, 2 Cor. 9. For whosoever bestows his Alms sparingly, and unwillingly, he shall be Treated in the same manner as him that refuseth to part with it. Therefore St. Paul declares, *When I should give all my Goods to nourish the poor, if I have no Charity I am nothing*, 2 Cor. 13. God loves a chearful Giver, and delights in such sacrifices, 2 Cor. 9. Remember therefore Christians, that God shall judge you at the last day, not by your Learning, Knowledg, Riches, or Dignities and Honours of this life, but by your Alms, Deeds, and acts of Charity and Hospitallity, and by the distributing of your Goods to the necessities of the Saints. Make to your selves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail they may receive

receive you into the everlasting Habitations, *Matt. 25. Rom. 12. Luke. 16.* That upon your Tomb, one may justly engrave, *He hath scattered, he hath given to the poor his Righteousness*, that is, his Charity and Alms-deeds remains for ever. *Psal. 112.*

11. Finally, we must not only take off our Heart and Affections, from the Riches, Honours, and Vanities of this World; but we must also deny our selves, tame and overcome our passions, and crucify our Flesh with its Lusts. Therefore our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ calls upon us from Heaven, *He that will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his Cross daily and come after me*, *Matt. 10.*

That we may be able to imprint this good Lesson in our minds, we should seriously consider in the first place, that we are but strangers and pilgrims in this world, and that we have no lasting City, *Heb. 13.* The Houses that God grants to us, are no perpetual Dwellings, but only Inns for our present accommodation: This was the frequent consideration of the great Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaack, and Jacob*, who saw the promises afar off, believed and embraced them; for *St. Paul* informs us, that they did ingeniously profess, that they were no better than strangers and pilgrims upon earth, and that their intention was to march forwards to their Celestial Countrey. This was *Jacobs* language when he appeared before *Pharoah*, *The days of my pilgrimage have been short and evil, they have not attain'd to the years of the life of my Fathers, and of the time of their pilgrimage*, *Heb. 12. Gen. 47.* And not only the antient Patriarchs, who never had any other possessions in the world, than a Tomb, or some small piece of ground, have acknowledg'd themselves to be strangers and pilgrims, but Princes and Kings also, whom God hath sanctified by his Holy Spirit, have freely confess'd the same; for *David* declares not in the time of his banishment, nor of his flight, nor in his calamities and misery,

fery, but in his most flourishing Estate, and in the midst of his Triumphs, Glory, Plenty, and Prosperity, he declares unto God, *I am a stranger and a forreigner with thee, as all my Fathers were*, Psal. 39. & 119. And when he speaks, not only of himself, but also of the rest of God's Children that are upon Earth, he makes no difficulty to confess, *We are strangers and forreigners with thee, as all our Fathers were, and our days are as a shadow upon Earth that have no stop*, 1 Ciron. 29. Rich and Poor, Masters and Servants, Princes and Subjects, all of us in general, we may, with reason, say to the Men of this World, as *Abraham* to the Children of *Heth*, *I am a stranger and a forreigner in the midst of you*. Now he that travels in a strange Countrey, may gather some Flowers in his passage, or take with him a few Ears of Corn; but if he be wise, he will never tarry to build a Palace. If he be well Treated in his Inn, he must not carry away the good chear; but if his Entertainment be bad, he must endure with patience, the inconveniencies, and contemn all the disorders that happen during his abode; if the way be deep, full of Mud, Bryars and Thorns, he must get out of them as soon as he can; and if it be good and pleasant, he must not stop in it, nor busy himself with needless inquiries. Every one that is a Traveller dreams of nothing but how to advance in his journey and go forward: Likewise, we being accustomed to Plenty and Want, to Riches and Poverty, to Honour and Dishonour; we ought to leave the things that are behind, and proceed forward to such as are before, that we may attain to the end and reward of our Heavenly Calling, *Phil.* 3.

2. Consider, not only, I beseech you, that we are strangers and forreigners in the world, but that we are not to inhabit always in this forrain Countrey, but that our passage will be but of few days, *Revel.* 7. We need but little to nourish and entertain us in this short race; at the end of it we shall neither hunger nor thirst,
and

and the Sun shall burn us no more. As it happen'd with *Jacob* and his Family, when they went into *Egypt*, they had no other Corn nor Food, but what was needful and necessary for them in the way; because they were certain to meet with plenty of all manner of good things in *Joseph's* House: Likewise we need not make any great provision for our selves in this life, because we are marching a-pace towards our Saviour Christ, our elder Brother, unto whom God hath given all power in Heaven and in Earth, *Matt.* 28. We are marching into a Countrey that abounds with all manner of true Riches, Excellency, Glory and Happiness.

3. Consider, that we are not only strangers, but Soldiers to fight under the banners of Christ our Captain, who judges and fights justly, *Revel.* 19. *Job* acknowledges, *That there is a warfare appointed to all Mortals upon Earth*, *Job* 7. But I may say that this War is chiefly for such as aim at the glorious immutability. For God calls them to endure grievous and violent encounters: Therefore *St. Paul* exhorts his beloved Disciple *Timothy*, to behave himself as a good Soldier in this just War, and to fight the good fight of Faith, *1 Tim.* 1. Now he that goes to War, must not incumber himself with the affairs and enjoyments of this life.

4. Moreover, consider that we are like to Soldiers that are engag'd in an Enemies Countrey, not with a design to conquer and establish our Selves; but only to obtain a free passage, having only an intent to pass through into our own Native Countrey. We don't desire to get into our hands, the Inheritances and possessions of the Worldlings, nor to rob them of their Crowns and Scepters; We have no other request to make to them, but that which the Children of *Israel* made to the Inhabitants of *Edom*, when they were going to the promised Land, *Numb.* 20. We desire leave to pass peaceably, and go along by the Kings high-way, to take possession of the Inheritance which God hath prepared

prepared for us from the beginning of the World: We would not so much as tast a bit of Bread without paying for it, nor drink a cup of water without leave.

5. Consider that this Life is a Race, and the World the place to run in; now such as are in a Race, must take heed that the Thorns do not catch hold of them in their Course, nor that their Feet sink into the Mire or the Clay; and that they may run swifter, they must cast off all burdens and incumbrances. If therefore we will run in this Race in such a manner, as that we may obtain the Prize, we must see that the Thorns and Briars of the World do not take hold of us, and that we sink not into the mire of the dirty Pleasures of this life; we must cast away all the burdens that overcharge us, and especially the burden of sin, which is so grievous, that Nature itself groans under it. It is the design of St. Paul's exhortation, *Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easiely beset us, and let us run with patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, Rom. 8. Heb. 12.*

9. Consider that our life is a continual wrestling; for we must wrestle, not only against Flesh and Blood, but also against Principalities and Powers, against the Lords of the World, and the Rulers of the darkniess of this age, against spiritual wickedness in high places, *Eph. 6. 1 Cor. 10.* Now he that intends to wrestle well, must diet himself accordingly. If therefore for a Corruptable Crown, Men tame their Bodies, render them supple and pliant, and abstain from delights and pleasures; how much more reason have we to do the like for an uncorruptible and a Glorious Crown?

7. Consider that God will have us to be conformable to the image of his Son, and that we should follow

low his footsteps; Now this good Saviour represents to us his own condition, *Rom. 8. 1 Pet. 2. The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the air have Nests, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head, Luke 9.* Therefore he made this confession before *Pontius Pilate, My Kingdom is not of this World, John 8.* and for that reason he reproves the gross and carnal imaginations of the two Disciples, as they were going to *Emaus*; O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets have spoken, *Luke 24.* ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his Glory? according to his blessed example, we must have little part and concernment in the World, and enter by many afflictions into the Kingdom of God, *Acts 24.*

8. I judge, that it is also necessary that we should represent at every moment unto our selves, that to speak exactly, we can have but the use and not the right enjoyment of Gods Creatures; We are intrusted with his favors, as the Stewards of his Blessings and Riches. At every moment he may call us to an account, and require from us a reason of our behaviour, and take from us our enjoyments: we should therefore look upon our Houses and Possessions, as upon things that are let unto us: for as we are not displeas'd to restore what we had borrowed, and what we enjoy, as long as it pleaseth the lawful owner to lend it; thus we shall freely leave this present life, and all our worldly possessions, in case we can but persuade our selves, that all belongs to God, and that he hath lent them but for a moment.

9. Moreover, it is necessary for us, to consider the fruitless labours and pains that we are at, when we purchase the Riches of the Earth, and ascend up to the Dignities and Honours; for as the Husbandman, when he had spent himself in manuring his Field, and water'd it with his sweat, is many times deceived of all fair hopes, and his expectation frustrated. Thus it commonly

commonly happens to the covetous and ambitious; they toil and labour in vain; the Goods which they think to grasp, slides away between their fingers as Water, or as Wax, that melts at the first approach of the Fire; and all the Honours which they expect to enjoy and embrace, are as a shadow that soon vanishes, or as a smoak that flies up out of their reach: when they have well sown these vanities, they reap nothing but greif and displeasure.

10. Take notice of the little contentment and satisfaction, that there is to be found in the most entire and perfect enjoyment of the advantages of this World: They are like Drink that leave us still a Thirst, and like an empty Meat that cannot satiate our Longing; Like the Waters of the Well of *Sychar*, whereof our Saviour said to the Woman of *Samarina*, *He that drinketh of the Water shall thirst again*, Joh. 4. It happens to the Worldlings, as to him who sleeps hungry, and dreams that he is eating, when he wakes his stomach is empty, *Isaiah* 29. or like to another that thinks in his sleep that he drinks, but when his eyes are open, he finds himself weary, and his appetite unsatisfied; for he that hungers for Money is never contented with the enjoyment of it; and he that thirsts for vain Glory, can never be pleas'd with all the great Honours and Grandeur of the World, *Eccl.* 5. Instead of satiating his longing Appetite, these things serve but to increase and augment it. The whole World was not large enough to satisfy the foolish ambition of *Alexander*; for it is said, that he wept when a Philosopher told him, that there were yet many Worlds to conquer; This Man, to whom six foot of Earth, was sufficient, had a mind to command over a thousand Worlds, if there had been so many in being.

11. Consider, that all the Treasuries and Riches of the *Indies*, and the pomp and the grandeur of the World, are not able to bring Peace to the Soul, nor quiet to
the

the troubled Consciences ; when a poor man hath got together a little Silver and Gold, or when a mean person is rais'd to the highest Offices and greatest Dignities, his misery continues still, although it changes its appearance ; oft-times it is so much the more unsufferable, in that it puts on a false luster, and a deceitful Gloss, in that such are constrain'd to live always mask'd, to suppress the pangs, the grief, the sighs and groans, that often interrupt their prophane smiles, and carnal delights and pastimes.

Therefore our Saviour compares Riches to Thorns, for they prick and gaul, not only the Hands, but the Heart and Bowels of such as embrace them with affection ; it may be said also that they are like Lions and Bears, for they are not to be caught without much difficulty, and they are as uneasy to be kept, because we must take heed, that we be not bit with their venomous and deadly Teeth. If you had but tried the horrible displeasures, the sensible griefs, and the secret fears, with the tormenting cares that attend upon the most glorious Scepters, and the richest Crowns ; you would never judge the saying of that Prince unreasonable, who exclaim'd against his Royalty in this manner, *O Crown, if any did but know thy weight, he would never lift thee up from the ground.* The most part of the pleasures, and the satisfactions of this life, depend much upon mans imagination ; and all this grandeur and humane Glory, is nothing but wind. The Royal Prophet teacheth us this Truth with much elegancy, when he saith, *That every man at his best state, is altogether vanity ; surely every man walketh in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain,* Psal. 39. Solomon, the most Learned of all Kings, the Richest and most Magnificent Prince of his time had refus'd nothing to his Eyes to gratify his Lust, he had tasted of all the delights and pastimes that can be imagin'd ; but at last he found so little satisfaction, and solid content, that he was forced

ed to acknowledge, *That all things under the Sun are but vanity and vexation of Spirit*, Eccles. 8.

12. Chiefly, we are to consider, that if our Enjoyments have been wrongfully gotten, as *Balaams* reward, *Achans* wedge of Gold and Scarlet Cloak; *Gebazis* changes of Raiment, *Ababs* and *Jezabels* Vineyard, *Judas* his Thirty pieces, *Numb.* 22. *Josh.* 7. they can bring no real content, nor peace to the Soul; but they rather fill us with horrors of Conscience, and with a fearful despair, *2 Kings* 5. *1 Kings* 21. If the voluptuous Worldling, that hath enriched himself by Rapine, Usury, and Extorsion, did wring with his hands his sumptuous Garments, where his pomp and pride appear, he should visibly squeez out the Tears of the afflicted and Poor People, *Matt.* 27. If he did but relish the right tast of the Liquors, that he drinks out of his Cups of Jasper and Chrystal, he should find, instead of Wine and Lemonade, the sweat and blood of many wretches; and if he did but seriously look into the Silver and Golden Vessels that are put upon his Table, he should percieve the Marrow and the Bones of such as he hath devour'd. Whosoever becomes fat with the substance of the Widow and the Fatherless, shall never open his Coffers, but he may spy there the Image of the Devil and the Hellish Furies; he may hear the crys and groans of such, whom he hath destroyed by his injustice and cruelties; If such escape unpunished here upon Earth, they shall surely feel the severity of God's vengeance hereafter. If there be no Sword to strike them, nor Fire to consume them, nor Leprosie to gnaw them, nor Dogs to tear them, nor Halter to hang them, they have a guilty Conscience that will perform more than this; for it will be their Witness to accuse them, their Judge to condemn them, their Rack, their Wheel, and Executioner to torture them; The time will come when the Worm that never dies, and Fire that shall never be quencht, shall torment and burn them.

13. Consider, that it is possible to be very indigent in the midst of a great plenty ; The Poets have had a design to represent this by the fiction of a Man thirsting in a River, whereof the waters did reach up to his chin. The Covetous Miser is like to this miserable wretch. He maybe also compar'd to the Figtree of the Gospel, cursed by our Saviour Christ for it brought forth no fruit for others, and it withered for want of nourishment : Therefore a pleasant poverty is better worth than riches with discontent ; Nature is content with a little, Piety with less ; but covetousness hath no measure. The Heathens have very well acknowledged, that he was the richest who was most content ; for the more things you desire, the more are wanting to you. It matters not much, if the Cup which is presented to you, be of Gold or of Earth, so that there be liquor enough to quench your thirst ; I would rather drink of a little clear stream of Water, than out of a great River all muddy and troubled. A little quantity of ground is sufficient to nourish a Man in his life, but less is necessary to cover him when he is dead : A little Money satisfies to subsist honestly in the fear of God, but less is required to dye happily, in the favour and love of our good Saviour. Kings, and the greatest Monarchs have but one body to nourish and to cloath, as well as the meanest of their Subjects ; They who enjoy least in the World, do use, or rather abuse the most of any, the things that they possess ; Instead of envying the Worldlings opulency, let us meditate upon *St. Paul's* excellent saying, *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content*, 1 Tim. 6. and let us imprint iuto our minds that other Sentence, *Piety with contentment is great gains*, 1 Tim. 1.

14. Christian Souls, cast your eyes upon all the things of the World that are most esteem'd, and you shall find that their possession is but uncertain and of a short continuance, for Riches have wings to fly to
Heaven

Heaven as an Eagle ; All Flesh is like Grass, and the Glory of Man as the Flower of the Field, the world passeth away with all its Lusts, *Prov.* 23. There needs but the pillaging of a Town, the breaking of a Merchant, or an unsuccessful and contrary suit in Law, to render thee poor, and bring thee to want ; A little sparckle of fire, is able to reduce all thy Riches into Ashes, and to bring thee to extream poverty : The least ill look can cover thy face with shame and confusion, and cast thee down from the highest humane Glory, into the deepest Abyss of Disgrace and Ignominy. The wise Man informs us, that *He who trusts in his Riches shall fall.* We may say so of such as relye too much upon great mens favour, for it is like a broken Reed that pierceth the hands of such as lean upon it. There is nothing here below so constant as unconstancy ; if the Earth did not often change its face and appearance, it would not be Earth as it is ; and if the world were not unconstant, it would cease to be world ; therefore it is no wonder if the Heathens, who understood not God's wise Providence, that governs the natural Beings, and draws Light out of Darkness, have represented Fortune blind, mounting sometimes on a Wheel, and in an instant tumbling down again. How many persons do we meet with reduc'd on a suddain to beggery, who a little before did flourish in all manner of Plenty ? How many are cast down into the dust, and become the scorn of the World, who were once rais'd to the highest Dignities, and the greatest Honours ? How many fall into the contempt and derision of the Vulgar, whose praises were once exalted up to Heaven ? In a word, how many do we see before our Eyes dragg'd along the streets, shut up in close prisons, brought upon the Scaffolds and Gallows, who where once the Glory of the World, admired of all men, and the scourge of honest Men ? When we run over, and consider the strange, unexpected, and suddain changes that we have seen in our days, they

seem to us as Dreams. *St. Paul* represents this great unconstancy of the World, to take off our Hearts and Affections from it. *The time, saith he, is short, it remaineth, that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away, 1 Cor. 7.* Because of this great unconstancy of all worldly advantages, *St. Paul* invites us to think upon the immortal Riches; *Charge, saith he, them that are rich, that they put not their trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life, 1 Tim. 6.* For the same reason the Son of God adviseth us, *not to lay up for ourselves Treasures upon Earth, where the Moth and Rust do corrupt, but lay up for your selves Treasures in Heaven, where the moth and rust don't corrupt, and where Thieves don't break through and steal, Matt. 6.* A wise Persian was well acquainted with this truth, therefore he hath left this Lesson for posterity, *The world is constant to no man, my Brother, apply thy self and thy heart to the great Creator of the world, and that shall suffice thee.*

15. Consider, that if the Riches and Honours do not leave us in our life-time, or in case none takes them away from us by violence, it is most certain, that death will deprive us of all, and will separate them from us for ever, *Psal. 49.* For when Man dies, he carries nothing with him, his Glory accompanies him not into his Grave, *1 Tim. 6.* We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain, that we can carry nothing out, *Job 1.* The King and the greatest Princes may speak in this language, as well as the meanest Soldiers of fortune, *Naked I came from my Mothers womb, and naked I shall return.* All the Treasures, Riches, Scepters and Crowns, shall never advantage us after our decease.

What

What was *Nebuchadnezzar* the better for having had so great a number of People within his Dominions? they could not hinder him from lying down upon a Couch of Worms, nor preserve him from being eaten with Vermin, *Isaiah* 14. To what purpose did the rich glutton swim in a Sea of all manner of Riches in his life time? after his decease he could not obtain a drop of cold water to allwage his violent thirst, *Luk* 16. The Author of the Book of *Wisdom* was entred into this Meditation, when he represents the Worldlings, spending themselves in lamentations for their former follies, and voluntary blindness, *What hath pride profited us, say they, or what benefit hath Riches brought us? all these things are passed away as a shadow, as a Post that runs swiftly, or as a Ship that slides through the troubled Waves,* *Wisd.* 16. Our Heirs give us nothing of all our substance, but a Winding sheet, a few Boards, or it may be some pounds of Lead, all consumes with us, and rots in our Graves in time. In short, we must not only quit and abandon all our Honours, Dignities, Treasures and Riches, but we must also quit this Body, this Flesh and Bones, covered with this beautiful Skin. O Man! remember that thou art but dust, and thou shalt return to Dust.

16. *Saladine* the famous Sultan of *Egypt*, hath left to posterity, an illustrious Testimony of the vanity of all Riches and worldly Grandeur; for upon his Death-bed he Commanded that his Winding-sheet should be carried at the end of a Launce by an Herald, who was to proclaim, *Here is all that this great Prince hath carried away of his Riches, Glory, Principalities and Lordships, which he hath enjoyed on Earth.*

17. Consider that it is a great cause of grief, that we know not who shall inherit the Fruits of all our Labours, which we keep with so much care and restless fears. Who knows but our greatest Enemies, and that which is worse, Gods enemies shall cloath themselves

with our spoils, and that which we have been so long gathering many years, shall be spent in a moment? of this vanity and evil, the Royal Prophet complains in the 39 Psalm, *Sure every man walketh in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain, he heapeth up Riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.*

18. Consider well, Christian people, the dangerous effects wrought in us by the love of the world, and the deceitfulness of Riches, it stifles in our Hearts the good seed of the Gospel, *Matt. 3.* it hinders it from growing up to salvation; it keeps many from glorifying God, and making an open profession of the truth. As it is said, of some of the chief Pharisees, that they believed in our Lord Jesus Christ, but they would not confess him before Men, because they did love more the glory of Men, than the Glory of God; therefore when *Cyrus* made proclamation, that the Children of *Israel* should have full liberty into their own Country, to rebuild *Jerusalem*, to repair God's Temple, to re-establish his neglected service; there were many Jews that cared not to obey this Prince's Command, nor God's Call, because they were settled in *Babylon*, they were too much wedded to the pleasures and delights of that City, and therefore loath to part with their Concerns there for *Jerusalem*: for the same cause that young man mentioned before, would not follow the Saviour of the World, nor obey his Command, because he had much Riches, and had settled his Heart and affections upon them. As God's Ark and *Dagon* cannot dwell together under one roof, *1 Sam. 5.* so the love of God, and the love of the World, can never subsist together; therefore *St. John* adviseth us, *Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; If any man love the World, the love of the Father, is not in him, 1 Joh. 2.*

19. Take notice, that this is the passion that stops so many in their first beginnings of Piety; for as *Lots* wife was changed into a Statue of Salt, as soon as she had looked

20. From hence it is, that so many persons, esteem'd well-grounded in Religion and Piety, are perswaded at last, to turn their backs to God, and to make shipwreck of their faith. What was the cause of the Israelites murmuring so often, and desiring to return into Egypt? was it not as we have already taken notice, because their Hearts and Affections were settled and fixed in that cursed Land, from whence God had deliver'd them by so many miracles? and wherefore did *Demas* leave *St. Paul* and Christ's Gospel? It was because *he loved too much this present World*. In short, our own experience confirms to us the saying of our Saviour, *No man can serve two masters, for he will hate the one and love the other, or he will cleave to one, and despise the other, you cannot serve God and Mammon.*

21. Consider, that if these worldly Goods and Honours don't produce in us these woful and lamentable effects, they produce them in our posterity ; many would live happier in the World, and be honeſter Men, if their Parents had not left them ſo much Riches, and ſo many Honours to poſſeſs ; their Riches and Honours therefore do occaſion many evils, and oft-times they caſt them headlong into ſeveral debaucheries and inſolencies : it is that which fills them full of a ridiculous vanity, and of an unſufferable pride, that renders them hateful to God and Man. In a word, it is that which

makes them forget God, and unmindful of the Treasures and advantages of his Kingdom, *I rov. 30.* Therefore *Agar* presented this excellent Prayer unto God, *Give me neither Poverty nor Riches, feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or, lest I be rich and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* Wretched *Midianite*, for what purpose dost thou labour so carefully to gather up Riches for thy Children? It may be that these Riches which thou dost snatch from others, or which thou dost get with the loss of thy Soul, shall serve but to get *Golden Calves*, be the substance of infamous Idols, as *Gideon's* Gold plunder'd upon the *Midianites* was employed in an Ephod, which became a snare to his House, and to all *Israel*; Thus it happens many times, that the Goods which are gotten with the expence of much blood and sweat, and the Honours unto which we climb up with so much earnestness and passion, become snares to our posterity; heycast them headlong in an Abyss of misery.

22. I should not forget that death is a kind of sleep, therefore in Holy Scripture, to dye, and to fall asleep, are to be understood in the same sence; now, as we cannot conveniently fall asleep, unless we set aslee and forget all the troublesome affairs of the World; Likewise it is altogether impossible to dye comfortably and peaceably, if we don't banish out of our hearts betimes, all the foolish fancies that disturb us, and all the cutting cares that undermine and consume us.

23. To this purpose, profane History tells us of a remarkable passage of *Cyneas*, a great Minister of State, to *Pyrrhus*, King of *Epirus*, That when he saw his Master so busy in raising of an Army, to march against the *Romans*, he began to argue with him in this manner; Sir, If it please God, to grant you the victory over the *Romans*, how will you employ your self next? The King answered, We will then endeavour to conquer
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the rest of *Italy*; and when we shall have *Italy* in our possession, replied *Cyneas*, what shall we do afterwards? We will go against *Sicily*, saith the King; the discreet *Cyneas* continued to demand, and when we have all *Sicily*, what shall we do? *Pyrrhus* answered him, we will pass into *Africa*, and take *Carthage*, and after that we may recover *Macedonia*, and command all *Greece* without controul; But Sir, replied *Cyneas*, when we shall have got all into our possession, what shall we do then? The King answer'd him with a smiling countenance, My friend, we will then repose our selves, And take our fill of Delight and Pleasures: then *Cyneas* began to tell the King, What hinders us now, Sir, from taking our Rests and Delights? for we have all that in our hands, that we are going to seek so far, with so much Bloodshed and Danger. We may apply this to our selves, we have most of us intricate and hidden designs, which cannot be accomplish'd in the age of one Man. We are afraid to dye, as if Death had already caught us by the throat; and yet we have so many desires to fulfil, as if we were all immortal; we build and adorn our sumptuous Dwellings, as if we were never to leave the World; And we are always gathering so much, as if we had the charge of providing for a Royal Army; Let us therefore in this case imitate the wise Minister of State; Let us ask our selves from what purpose are these vast designs? what end do we propose to our selves of all our labours and care? what do we aim at when we run so many dangers, and endure so many inconveniencies? our Souls will answer us, without doubt, that it is with an intention, at last, to rest our selves in peace, to live at ease, and enjoy the fruits of our labours. Let us enjoy that happiness and that satisfaction at present; Let us not stay to rest our selves, until the time when Death shall stretch us in our Graves; Let us be satisfied with the goods that God hath already bestowed upon

upon us, and let us use them with thanksgiving. Miserable wretches that we are! why do we labour and torment our selves for so many things? seeing that here is but one thing necessary, and that is Piety, the fear of the Lord, and the expectation of his eternal Felicities; Let us therefore make election of this good part, and it shall never be taken from us, *Luk. 20.*

24. If we desire to imprint in our minds the contempt of the World, and of its Vanities, we must often meditate with serious attention, upon the excellency of our Nature, sanctified by Grace, upon the worthiness of our spiritual calling, and upon the Riches and Glory of that eternal Happiness, which God hath prepared for us in Heaven. It is impossible to look upon these things as we ought, but we must conclude with the Apostle, that the World with all its Pleasures and Treasures, is not worthy of us. The Woman that appeared to St. *John* in a vision, was cloathed with the Sun, having the Moon under her feet, and a Crown of twelve Stars upon her-Head; This is a lively Image of Christs Church in general, and of every faithful Soul in particular, for when we are cloathed and adorned with Jesus Christ the Son of Righteousness, we ought to trample upon all the pomp and magnificence of the World, and laugh at the revolutions of the Ages, at the Vanities and unconstancy of the Earth; we must seek our greatest Glory, and our most ravishing Delights in the Doctrine of the twelve Apostles, who are as so many Stars shining in the firmament of the Church; Let the World alter its face, as often as the deceitful *Laban*; we ought to be as the Rays of the Sun, always like our selves, for our Glory is not as that of the World, and of the Prince of this age, that is reduc'd to nothing; it is not settled upon a vain and failing foundation, but upon the living and true God, who is the same yesterday and to day, and who shall be the same for all Eternity, *Heb. 14.* Some glory in their
Chariots

Chariots, others in their Horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord our God, *Heb. 13. Psal. 29.*

25. Consider that God hath lifted up our countenance, and turned our face to look up to Heaven, that he might thereby teach us to lift up thither also our Hearts, and carry thither our Affections and Desires. He hath created our Souls, and given them a spiritual Being, that they may take their flight above all earthly substance. He hath adorned them with immortality, that they might contemn all things that are not immortal as themselves, all decaying and perishing enjoyments. In short, seeing God hath prepared for us his Heaven, his Paradise, his Glory, his Treasures, and the Rivers of Eternal Delights; how can we yet stop our desires, and be content with this dust of the Earth, where Serpents crawl?

26. When *Alexander* was preparing to leave *Macedonia*, and go to the Conquests of the *Persian* Monarchy, he gave away all his Goods to his faithful friends and servants; *Perdicas*, one of his Favorites demanded of him, what he had reserved for himself; The King answered, that he had reserved H O P E. Thus ought we to fit our selves to depart out of the World, by leaving our Parents, Friends, and Estates that we now enjoy; and if our Flesh enquires of us, what we kept for our selves, let us confidently answer, That we have kept our H O P E. I may assure you Christian Souls, that this your answer shall be more rational and better grounded, than that of *Alexander* to his Favorite, for this Prince did leave his Patrimony and Kingdom without any need; but whether we will or no, we must leave the World. *Alexander* did quit his certain Goods of a doubtful Hope, but we abandon perishing enjoyments for an Hope more secure and settled, than Heaven and Earth. *Alexanders* expectation was but of a temporal Kingdom, and of a short and vanishing Glory; but our expectation is of an uncorruptable Crown,
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and eternal Triumphs; Death hath siezed upon *Alexander* in the flower of his Age, put a period to all his Victories, and consumed all his Trophies; but we are in hopes of conquering Death it self, and this hope will not deceive us, *Rom. 5.* This therefore being our assurance, it is no wonder if *St. Paul* tells us, *That hope is as a sure and unmovable Anchor of the Soul, piercing into the Vail, that is, into Heaven it self, where Jesus Christ is entred, as our fore-runner.*

27. God hath hid in the Earth, Gold, Silver, and Jewels, to teach us to trample upon all the Riches and Pomp of the World; but he hath rais'd up to the highest Heavens, our spiritual Treasure, and our immortal Crowns, that we might lift up thither our Hearts and our most earnest Affections; he desires that we should imitate the Prophet *David*, who did always comfort himself with the expectation of the Kingdom promised to him, and confirmed by *Samuels* anointing, in his flight and grievous persecutions. God would have us do as the true *Israelites* did in the Babylonish Captivity; they had always their Hearts and Affections in *Jerusalem*, and in the midst of their deepest sorrows, *Jerusalem* was all their comfort. Likewise we, who are wandring up and and down in this miserable WilderNESS, that live in the world as in a *Babylon*, in a kind of Captivity, we ought to comfort our selves and rejoyce, in expectation of the Kingdom of Heaven, that hath been prepared for our fruition from all Eternity, and whereof the Holy Spirit is the true Unction that hath confirmed the promise of it, and given us the earnest, *Psal. 137. Gal. 4.* The Eye of our Faith should always be fixed upon our Celestial *Jerusalem*, that is, the Mother of us all, and the place of our Eternal Rest, *Colos. 3.* The Apostle doth therefore exhort us, *If you be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God; Think on things that are*

are above, and not on things on the Earth, for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

28. When Men are going to live in another Countrey, where their Money will not pass, they furnish themselves with Bills of Exchange, and find the means of receiving it in other Coyn: Therefore, seeing that our Gold, our Silver, and our present Jewels will not pass into Heaven, the place of our Eternal Abode, let us send thither betimes, all our Riches and Treasures by Bill of Exchange; and that we may entrust them with an assurance of a notable advantage, and of a lawful gain, let us put them into God's hands, for he will restore one hundred times more in his Kingdom: Let us now distribute them to the poor, to the Members of Christs Mystical Body, and this Divine Saviour will then acknowledg, that they have been given to his own Person. You that fear so much to lose your Money, get such Purfes that will never decay, and make to your selves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may receive you into Eternal Habitations.

29. Lastly, as the *Israelites*, when they had tasted of the Fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, desir'd with a most earnest Passion, to enjoy such a noble and delicious Countrey, and their Abode in the Wilderness became tedious and unsufferable: Likewise, we who have the First Fruits of the Spirit, and a fore-taste of our Heavenly Paradise; let us aspire with all our Heart to the Heavenly *Canaan*, and let us long continually for those unspeakable Delights. All worldly Pleasures have no relish with us, and the greatest sweetness of this life is turn'd into bitterness, so that we do often present *Dauids* Prayers unto God, *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people; O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoyce in the gladness of thy Nation, that I may glory with thine Inheritance,* Psal. 136.

To conclude this discourse, Seeing that we have no lasting City here below, but that we seek for that which is to come, seeing that we know not the hour when God shall take us out of the World, to introduce us into his Holy *Jerusalem*, *Heb. 11. Luke 21*. Let us take heed that our hearts be not over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and with the cares of this life, least that day surprize us unawares, And as the Holy Apostles left their Nets to follow Jesus Christ, *Math. 24*. Let us also leave the vain cares, the ill-grounded fears and deceiving hopes that intangle our Souls, that when it shall please God to call us, we may be ready to answer his Heavenly Message; Let us accustom our selves betimes, to Will what God willeth, and to obey him without resistance; Let us cast all our cares upon God, and repose our selves upon his wise and fatherly Providence, *1 Pet. 5*. Let us look with contempt upon the World, upon its vain Grandeur, and decaying Riches, esteem not any thing upon Earth, nor that which Man is able to promise, or to procure, but esteem and value the blessed advantages that we expect in Heaven, and that are disposed and entrusted in God's own hands, *2 Tim. 1. Tit. 2*. Let us prefer *Job's* Dunghil and Ashes, before the proud Throne and Glorious Monarchy of *Nebuchadnezzar*; Let us fancy the begging Estate of poor *Lazarus* more happy, than the overflowing abundance of the rich Miser. Imprint in your minds, that blessed saying of the Son of God, *What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, if he destroys himself, and looseth his Soul?* *Luke 9*. Let us have always before our eyes the image of that rich Worldling, Who had gathered much wealth for his Soul, but his Soul was not wealthy nor rich before God; Remember what he saith to his Soul, *Soul, thou hast much Goods gather'd up for many years, rest thy self, eat and drink and be merry;* but what doth God say to him? *Thou fool, in this very night thy soul shall be taken away from thee, and the things*
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that thou hast gathered, whose shall they be? Instead of studying how to enlarge our Barns and Cellars, and to increase our Revenues and Treasures; let us labour to set some bounds to our desires, and let us be content with what we have at present, seeing that we have but a breath in our Nostrils, and that we are cloathed with a mortal Body, let us not entertain such great designs and suffer not our longings to be immortal; Let us always, in every place, be ready to end our life, to put the last stone to this building, or rather let us be always in a disposition of dissolving this earthly Tabernacle; let us willingly break all the bands and ties that unite us to this miserable Earth, that when Death shall come, it may have nothing to do, but to cut the last string, by which our soul is naturally joyned to this languishing Body. Settle and fix your strongest affections in Heaven; that where your Treasure is, your Hearts may be there also. Let us not be lull'd asleep, as the foolish Virgins, but having our Reins girded, our Candles lighted, Let us be prepared at every moment, to go to meet our Heavenly Spouse, and follow him into the Marriage Chamber. Let us be like a Ship at Anchor, ready to set sail with the first favourable wind; and as a Soldier entirely arm'd that waits for the day of Battel, and for the Signal, to mount upon his Horse, that he may appear in the field at the sound of the Trumpet. Let us send beforehand, all our most precious Jewels, into the most glorious Palace of Eternity; that our Bag and Baggage being ready prepar'd, we may have nothing to do, but to take our last farewell. If any consideration of Flesh and Blood hinders us, let us break asunder all these Bands by the strength of our *Nazareth*, that is, by the vertue of Gods Divine Spirit, which he hath been graciously pleased to grant unto us; and if the persons that we love and cherish, as tenderly as your souls, or those whom we are to reverence and honour, labour
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To stir up the bowels of our compassion, and to impede us in our Holy resolutions, by base and earthly considerations: let us tell them, as our Saviour did to *Mary Magdalen*, *Let me alone, for I am going to my Father*, John 20. Stop not my course, for I hold already the prize, and the promised Crown. In short, as *Abraham* let the Ram loose whereof the Horns were taken in a Thicket, and offer'd it up in Sacrifice to God, *Gen. 21.* Likewise let us free our minds from all worldly cares and carnal affections; Let us offer them up all to God, as a sweet smelling Sacrifice, let us present them as a Burnt-offering, consume them in the Flames of an Holy Zeal and love of his Divine Majesty. When the Christian shall be thus prepar'd, he shall never stand in fear of Death, he will say to it with an assured countenance, Come when thou wilt, O Death, I desire no reprieve; for along while ago I have settled my affairs, and wait for thee with patience: the chief part of my self is not here below, my Heart is already ravish'd into Heaven, where God expects me with Arms wide open; Therefore notwithstanding thy fearful darkness, and the design that thou hast to destroy me, I will follow thee as courageously and as joyfully as *St. Peter* did the Angel of Light, that open'd to him the Gates of his Prison, and freed him from his Chains, *Acts 12.*

A Prayer and Meditation for such as prepare for Death, by a renunciation of the World.

O Infinite Lord of Heaven and Earth, who disposest of good and evil, by thy Divine Providence, and admirable Wisdom, thou hast not suffer'd us to have here a lasting City, that we might seek for that which is to come; Thou dost discover before our eyes the vanity and unconstancy of all things under the Sun, that we might labour to attain to solid and everlasting advantages; Thou hast placed and reserved in Heaven inexhaustable Treasure of Riches, uncorruptible Crowns of Glory, and Eternal Triumphs, that thither we might transport our Heart and affections. The source of Heavenly pleasures is with thee, that we might always be a thirst for the strong and living God; and that we might desire, with an Holy earnestness, to look upon thy beautiful and glorious Face. Most Glorious Creator, seeing thou hast bestowed upon me an immortal Soul, suffer me not to be so wretched, as to content my self with these mortal vanities; and seeing thou hast made it of a Spiritual and Heavenly nature, suffer me not to be so unhappy, as to wallow in this miserable dust of the Earth, or to cast my self into the puddle and dirt of carnal Lusts. Give me Grace to renounce the World, and all the Vanities that the World adores. Give me Grace to possess all these decaying and perishing things, as not possessing them; that I may trample upon all the Pomp and glory of the Age; that I may consider that the Gold, the Silver, the precious Jewels, whereof the apparent beauty deceives the carnal eyes of Men, is nothing else but hardened Earth, that will crumble away, and dissolve into Dust; that I may remember, that after my decease, all these things will profit me no more than that vile Earth, and the Stones that shall cover my dead Corps, or the Wood or Lead which shall be given to it for a Coffin. Give me grace to despise all the

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Honours and Dignities, after which the Men of the World run so impatiently; for they are but like a shadow that passeth away, and like the smoke that ascendeth up out of our reach. Pluck out of my heart the cares of this life, and all solicitousness for the Earth, that Death may never surprise me unawares, and that there may be nothing to stop or hinder from going to thee, when thou shalt be pleased to call me: that my soul being totally disengag'd, and freed from all these Bryars and Thorns, I may be always ready at every moment, to be offered unto thee as a living and a burnt Sacrifice. The Children of Israel did fix and raise their Camp at thy Command; Give me also Grace to be as ready prepar'd to live and dye, to remain in this Tabernacle, and to depart out of it, when thou shalt send thine Orders: and as this people did pass over the River Jordan, with a wonderful joy, to take possession of the promised Land; O that I might also leave this miserable Wilderness with transports of joy, to enter into the Celestial Canaan, where the Milk, and Hony of Divine Pleasures and of Eternal Comforts flow, as in their natural Channel. O God, who art my portion, and mine inheritance, cast me not away with the men of the World, whose portion is in this life. Thou dost fill their paunch with thy good things, they are full, and leave sufficient for their Babes; but for me, all my comfort is, that I shall behold thy face in Righteousness, and shall be sanctified when I awake with thy likeness, Amen.

CHAP. XI.

The Fifth Remedy against the fears of Death, is to renounce Vice, and to apply our selves to the practice of Piety and Sanctification.

GOD is so wonderful in all his Works, and he governs all his Creatures in such a manner, that his very Enemies are constrain'd to acknowledge this Truth; You have an excellent example in *Balaam*, who beholding the Tents of the Children of *Israel*, breaks out into this passionate wish, *Let me dye the death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his*, Numb. 25. He was a wicked Varlot that loved the wages of iniquity, nevertheless he perceived by that Prophetical Light with which his Soul was enlightned, how sweet and comfortable Death was to such as addict themselves, in this life, to the Service and fear of Almighty God; and how different it is from the death of the profane Worldlings, who give themselves over to their Lusts and delight; in the unlawful pleasures of the *Flesh*: for as the Drunkards sleep with a disturb'd and unquiet fancy; likewise such as are drunken and full with the base and rotten pleasures of this life, if they be not hardened by Atheisme, do commonly depart out of the World, with strange frights, and horrid gripings of Conscience, that cannot be express'd. It is otherwise with a good Christian, for as the Handicrafts man who hath work'd all the day in his Shop, and the Husbandman, who hath wearied himself in following his Plow, lays himself down at night in peace; so it is with a good Christian, who hath carefully attended the works of Piety and Mercy in this life; he sleeps his last sleep with a great quiet of mind and satisfaction

tisfaction of soul, as righteous *Jacob*, when he travelled a journey to his Mothers friends, with his Fathers command, was not frightened to behold the Sun go down, although he was in the midst of an open field, *Gen. 28.* but he laid himself down in peace, and slept sweetly, having no other Bed but the Earth, no other Pillow but a Stone, no other covering than the Heavens, nor other Curtains, then the dark shadows of the night. Likewise, a Soul sanctified by the Spirit of God, that walks in all the Commands of his Heavenly Father, shall never be astonished; for wheresoever his Sun goes down, wheresoever Death Arrests him, he will look upon himself as in another *Bethel*; he will sleep quietly in the Lord Jesus, in the most cruel death, he will feel unspeakable and glorious joys, and a Peace of God which passeth all understanding, *Acts 23.*

We may take notice of this Blessed disposition in the Apostle *St. Paul*, who had behaved himself with a good Conscience towards God and towards Man, *1 Cor. 15.* He had labour'd more in his Ministry, than all the other Apostles, therefore he stands in no fear of deaths approaches; but rather we may see him full of expectation and desires, to pass through Death into glory and Eternal Felicity. This disposition is no less remarkable in *Stephen*, the first Martyr of Christ, *Acts 6.* in the midst of his most grievous torments, he had a countenance shining, as that of an Angel, which was a certain testimony of his inward peace of Conscience, and of the extraordinary joy of his Soul; for as the Wise man informs us, *A merry heart maketh a cheerful Countenance*, *Prov. 15.* From the same wisdom proceeds this other Oracle, that foretels unto every one what shall happen unto him. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death*, *Prov. 14.* *Eccl. 1.* Unto this is agreeable the excellent saying of Jesus the Son of *Syrach*, *It shall be well at the*
last

last with him who fears God, he shall find favour at the day of his death. This life is but a moment that flies away apace, and yet it determines our Eternal Estate ; it raiseth us to the highest Glory of Heaven, or else it casts us headlong into the deepest Abyfs of Eternal Misery ; for what Man soweth that shall he reap, he that soweth in the flesh shall reap of the flesh corruption ; but he that soweth in the Spirit shall reap of the Spirit, Eternal Life.

If you are afraid of a cruel and unhappy death, keep your selves from an evil and a prophane life ; for commonly, as Man's life is, so is his death. The most part of those who live in the foul Lusts and Prophaness, dye in hardness of heart, or in grievous despair. God's patience, wearied out, changes it self into a just resentment and fury : Commonly Cod leaves at the hour of death, such as have left him in the course of their lives ; he is inexorable to the crys and sighs of such as have shut their Ears and Hearts to his Holy Word, and his Fatherly Instructions ; he laughs at the horrid fears and most sensible torments of those that trample upon his sacred Commands, according to his own words, *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh,* Prov. i.

King *Abab* was desirous to hear a pleasing Prophecy of happy things, of the victory over the Syrian Army ; nevertheless he did continue in his Impieties and Tyranny ; therefore the Prophet *Micah* was not afraid of his displeasure, but tells him boldly of the approaching Judgements of God, which did hang over his guilty Head : likewise some sinners desire to be flatter'd and soothed up in their extravagancies, they expect, notwithstanding their crimes, declarations of Joy and Prosperity : but we should be false Prophets, possessed with a lying Spirit, if we did not foretel to such peo-

ple, that a most lamentable and miserable death hasten apace upon them, we should have a cruel charity for them; if we did not labour to save them by fear, as out of a fire; if we did not shew them Hell with its jaws open ready to swallow them up, and the Eternal Torments wherewith God will punish all impenitent and hardened sinners. Knowing what God's vengeance is, we must perswade Men to embrace Faith and Righteousness, and if we did fail in this our duty, their Blood should be required at our hands.

To what purpose have the Heathen Philosophers discoursed so Learnedly of the shortness of our life? To what purpose have many of their Princes entertain'd things on purpose to mind them of their mortal condition? Such kind of thoughts did fly in their fancy, but they reapt but little benefit from them, because they did not oblige them to an Holy and Reformed Life; and by consequence they did not prepare them to a blessed Death. It was also to no purpose that *Balaam* desired so passionately to dye the death of the Righteous, and that his last end might be like a just mans, *Numb. 23.* for because he lived the life of a sinner, and continued in his Abominations and Idolitry *Numb. 31.* therefore he died as they, and was comprehended in their punishment; as he was a partner in their crimes, it was but just and reasonable that he should share in their calamities, and be a partaker of their torments.

To abandon Vice and Sin, is to take from Death its Venom, and all its fiery Darts; it is to pluck from this furious Beast, its Teeth and Claws; it is to break the Cords and Chains by which the Devil drags us into Eternal damnation. It is to destroy the Monsters that fright us, and stifle the Furies that persue us. In short, it tends to change Hell and its grievous Torments into an Heaven and its Glory. There was never yet any person that lived an Holy and Religious Life, but he died happily in the favour of his God. Now that that
 Lord

Lord knocks, open unto him the door of your hearts and at the hour of Death, he will open unto you the, Gates of Heaven; present, and give unto him, whilist you are alive, your Bodies and Souls, and doubtless he will except them, and confirm the Gift with his own Seal; here below he will enrich you with his Graces, and crown you at last with his Glory. *Blessed are they that dye in the Lord, but to dye in the Lord we must live, to the Lord, that we may be able to say with St. Paul, Whether we live we live to the Lord, whether we dye we dye to the Lord, whether we live or dye we are the Lords.*

To perswade us to this Religious Duty, we must consider in the first place, the Command that he gives us of loving him, fearing him, of repenting of our sins, and of walking in his Holy ways; unto this he exhorts us in the Holy Writings of the Old Testament, as in the 6 of Deuteronomy, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* And in the 26 of Isaiah, *Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear and your dread.* And in the 55 Chap. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* In the 2 Chapter of Joel, *Turn ye to the Lord with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping and with mourning.* And in the 1 Chapter of Malachi, *The Son Honours the Father and the Servant his Lord; If therefore I am your Father, where is the Honour due unto me? If I am your Lord, where is the fear of my Name?*

2. Jesus Christ is not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it, *Matt. 5.* Therefore in the New Testament, he calls upon us as frequently to study Piety and vertue. As in the 5 Chapter of St. Matthew, *Let your Light so shine before men, that they seeing your good Works, may Glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* And in the

I Chapter of St. Mark, Repent ye and believe the Gospel. And St. Paul to the Romans exorteth in this manner, I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; hate evil and cleave to that which is good, Rom. 12 And in the 13 Chapter, Walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof. And in the 1 Corin. Chap. 15. Awake to Righteousness and sin not. And in Ephesians the 4th. Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts, and put you on the New man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holyness. And in Coloss. the 3d. Mortify your Members which are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleaness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry. In the 1 Ep. Thessalonians 5. Chap. Watch and be sober, abstain from all appearance of evil. And in Phil. 4. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any Vertue, and if there be any Praise, think on these things. I might with as much ease number the Stars of the Sky, as to reckon up all the passages that call upon us, and exhort us to an Holy life.

3. God doth not only Command us to apply ourselves to Holiness, Justice, and Innocency of life; but he reposes himself also for our example, That as the obedient and good Children delight to imitate their Fathers Vertues, we also might endeavour to copy out in our lives, the Divine perfections of our Heavenly Father, and imprint in our Hearts his Sacred Image; There-

Therefore in the 11. Levit. he tells us, *Be ye Holy, for I am Holy.* And St. Peter repeats the same passage in this manner, *As he that calleth you his Holy, so be ye also Holy in all manner of conversation; for it is written, be ye Holy, for I am Holy,* 1 Pet. 2. And our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ gives us the same Lesson, *Love your Enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father that is in Heaven,* Matth. 5. for he causeth his Sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and sends his Rain upon the just and the unjust, be therefore perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect. The Apostle St. Paul speaks in the same manner to the Ephesians, *Be followers of God as dear Children, put off the old man, and put on the new man, which is created according to God in justice and true holiness.* Chap. 5. And in the 3d. Coloss. *Now put off all these, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blasphemy, filthy Communication out of your mouth. Lye not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his Deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledg, after the Image of him that created him.*

4. Meditate seriously upon the excellent and precious promises that God hath given to such as addict themselves to Piety and good Works. As in the 20. Ex. *I shew mercy unto thousand generations of them that love me and keep my Commandements.* And 1 Sam. Chap. 2. *I will honour them that honour me.* And in Isaiah. 3. *Says to the Righteous, that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.* And in the 5 of St. Matthew, our Saviour saith, *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God,* And in the 6 Chapter, *Seek first the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you over and above.* And in Chapt. 7. *Whosoever shall call me Lord shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.* St. Paul, speaks thus to the

the Romans, If by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh you shall live, Chap. 8. And in the 1 Ep. to Tim. Piety or Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promises of this present life, and of that which is to come. And in Revel. the 21. Blessed and Holy is he who hath part in the first Resurrection, the second death shall have no power over him.

5. Consider, that the whole World trembles at the denunciation of the judgments with which God threatens to punish all impenitent Sinners, as in Exod. 20. I am the Lord thy God, strong, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the Fathers, upon the Children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me. And in 1 Sam. Chap. 2. I will honour them that honour me, and will despise them that honour me, And St. Matt. Chap. 12. Of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account at the day of judgement. And St. John, Chap. 3. Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, that is, of a Spirit purifying like water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And in Rom. 8. They who are in the flesh cannot please God. And in 1 Cor. Chap. 6. Be not deceived neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And the Apostle to the Hebrews is not content to tell us, That without Holiness no man shall see God; but he saith something more; That if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a terrible expectation of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, for our God is a consuming fire, Chap. 10. And in the Revelations, it is not only said, that in the Holy Jerusalem there shall no unclean thing enter, or that committeth Abomination, or a Lye, and that God will shut out the Dogs, the Witches, the Fornicators, the Murderers, the Idolaters, and whosoever doth

doth love, or do a lye, Chap. 2. 22. But the Spirit of God assures, that the timorous, that is, such as are more afraid of Man than of God, the Unbelieving, the Execrable, and Murderers, the Fornicators and Witches, the Idolaters and Lyers shall have their portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second death, Chap. 13.

6. When we should speak the language of Angels, when we should give all our Goods to nourish the Poor, and when we should give our Body to be burn'd, if we have not charity, we are but like the sounding Brass, and like the tinkling Cymbal. When we should be able to perform Signs and Wonders, if we be not cloathed with Innocency and Holiness, if we be not adorned with Meekness and Love, Christ will at last treat us as the foolish Virgins, with a *Depart from me, I know you not*. When we should be able to cast the Devil out of other Men, it will avail us nothing, unless we can cast him out also of our own hearts, with all the wicked Lusts that he nourisheth there. To what purpose shall such cry out at the great day, *Lord, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name? have not we cast out Devils in thy name? have not we done many miracles in thy name?* Jesus will return them this sad answer, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*.

7. Consider, that whatsoever be your share of the advantages of this life, when you shall come to dye, you shall not carry away with you your Riches, your Honorus, nor your pleasures; but if you be rich in Faith and good Works, if you be cloathed with Holiness, and crowned with Righteousness; If Piety, and the service of God be your delight, you shall carry away out of the World, this Spiritual Treasure, this Celestial Glory, and this Angelical Satisfaction. It is what the Holy Spirit teacheth, when it tells us; *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for they rest from their Labours, and their works follow them*.

8. Let

8. Let us always have before our eyes the blessed examples of so many Saints, who have traced us the way to Heaven; by their Piety and good Works, they are enter'd into the Paradise of God, and the Glory of his Kingdom. It is reported of a Painter, that when he had a design to represent an accomplished Beauty, he borrowed, from divers Objects, the excellencies and Perfections with which he was to adorn his Picture; from the Lillies he took their whiteness, from the Roses their red tincture, from another Object the wonder of the Eye, from another the coral of the Lips, and so of the other parts. Likewise to restore in our Souls the Image of God defaced by sin, we must borrow the Vertues and Excellencies of former Men; for example, Represent always to your selves *Abel's* Innocency, *Henoch's* Holy life, *Noah's* Justice, *Abraham's* Faith, *Lot's* Hospitality, *Isaak's* Obedience, the Faithfulness of *Jacob*, the Chastity of *Joseph*, the Patience of *Job*, the Meekness of *Moses*, the Zeal of *Phineas*, the Constancy of *David*, the Wisdom of *Solomon*, the Piety of *Josias*, the Prayers of *Daniel*, the Tears of *Jeremiah*, the Fastings of *Hester*, the Holy Earnestness of the Woman of *Canaan*, the Devotion of *Cornelius*, the charity of the *Samaritan*, the Alms of *Dorcas*, and of the poor Widow, the *Publicans* Humility, the good Thiefs Repentence, the Tears of *Mary Magdalen*, the Weepings of *Peter*, the undaunted Courage of *St. Paul*, and his indefatigable disposition, and the glorious Martyrdom of *St. Stephen* and of so many noble Souls, of all Ages and Sexes, who have gone to the torments with as much joy as to Feasts and to Triumphs; and who have sealed with their Blood the truth of the Gospel, with an undaunted resolution. Seeing therefore that we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us pursue with constancy, the Race that is set before us.

9. Chiefly, Let us look to Jesus the Author and finisher of our Faith, for he hath left us an example that we might follow his footsteps; All the Vertues that we admire in these faithful Souls, are but like many little beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and a weak Image of his Glory. There is no Fire so perfect, but it sends up a Smoak; nor Righteousness so accomplish'd, but hath its imperfections, whiles we are cloathed with this weak flesh. The behaviour of the most Holy and perfect, is defiled by many infirmities; but our Lord and Saviour is the Lamb without spot or blemish, in whose Mouth there is no guile; for it was necessary that we should have such an High Priest, who is Holy, Blameless, separated from Sinners. The perfect image of all Vertues was never found in any mortal Man on Earth, but Jesus Christ is the fairest amongst the Sons of Men, his Lips are full of Grace, in him alone we have a perfect model of all Vertues, and of all Perfections that we can imagine. Therefore when the Apostle had perswaded the *Romans* to renounce the Lusts of the Flesh, Drunkenness, Anger, Envy, and such like sins, instead of making an enumeration of the vertues opposite to these Vices, he thinks it sufficient to propose Christ's Holy example, *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, saith he, to teach us, that all the Vertues and Graces do enter and meet in the Sacred Person of our Saviour Jesus Christ, in the highest degree of perfection.

10. We are so much the more obliged to imitate Jesus Christ, and to imprint in our hearts his Holy Image, because that he is not only our Father, our Lord, and our King, but he is also the blessed Head of that Body, whereof we are Members; It is not just to unite defiled and profane Members to an Head so Glorious and so Holy; Whosoever gives himself over to his Lust and Delights, in the corruption of sin, maimes, as much in him lies, the Sacred Body of the Son of God.

This

This consideration drew from St. Paul this expression; *Shall I take the Members of Christ for to make them the Members of an whore?*

11. The Divine Spirits dwelling in our Hearts, is a great obligation to Holiness of life; know you not that you are the Temple of God? and the Holy Ghost dwelleth in you? *Ezek. 8.* Shall we be so base as to uncover our filthy and dirty thoughts before so Holy and Divine a Guest? shall we be so bold as to erect upon his Altar, Idols that may provoke him to jealousy? His eyes are so clean and pure, that they cannot suffer the sight of iniquity and sin; it is that which doth most afflict and grieve him; Therefore when St. Paul had advis'd the *Ephesians*. *That no corrupt Communication should proceed out of their mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the hearers,* he adds immediately after, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* And if there be any that are not moved with the presence of such a Glorious Person, let him tremble at this fearful threatening, *If any destroy the Temple of God, God will destroy him,* 1 Cor. 3.

12. There was two Tables of Stone in the Ark of God's Covenant, where God himself had written his Law, which he gave to his People by the Ministry of *Moses*, 1 Kings 6. Seeing that the God of all mercy hath chosen thy Soul to be his Sanctuary, and the pavillion of his Glory, his Sacred Commandments must be there engraven upon the Table of thy Heart, thou must be moved with an earnest desire for the service of God, and for an exact conformity to his Holy Will, that we may be able to say to you, what St. Paul said to the Christians of his days, *Ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, written not with Ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in Tables of Stone, but in fleshly Tables of the Heart:* And that you may say with the Royal Prophet

phet, *My God, my Delight hath been to do thy Will, thy Law is within me, 2 Cor. 3.*

13. Let us represent to our selves continually, the great and many Obligations that we have to fear God, to love him, and to serve him; he is the most perfect of all Beings, he is perfection it self, infinitely lovely; so that if there were neither Hell to punish us, nor Heaven to reward us, he ought to be served and reverenc'd, because of Himself, and of his Divine Perfections. This consideration causeth *Jeremiah* to break forth into these lofty expressions, *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations, for to thee doth it appertain, forasmuch as among all the Wise Men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee, Jer. 10.*

14. Whilst we are traveling here below, we are not capable of such an high and Celestial Meditation; it belongs only to the Angels, whom God hath invested with Light and Glory; and to the Heavenly Spirits whom he hath admitted to the contemplation of his Face. Let us therefore seriously consider the Blessings and Favours which we have received from this great God, who hath created us in his own Image, and who hath made us to be the Master-pieces of all his inferior Wonders. He hath placed in us a breviation of all the Beauties and perfections of the World, he hath given us a Being, as to the Sun, Moon, and Stars; A Life like the Plants, Sence as to the Animals, Understanding as to the Angels. In short, he hath infused into this Body fashioned with his own fingers an immortal Soul of an Heavenly Substance, a beam of his Glory, and a living Image of his Godhead. My Soul, therefore bless the Lord, and all that is within me bless his Holy name, my Soul, bless the Lord, and forget not all his benefirs, *Psal. 103.*

15. It is for mans sake that God hath stretched out the Heavens, established the Earth, poured out the waters, and prescribed Limits to the roaring Sea. It is
for

for Man's sake that this Gracious Creator hath adorned the Heavens with such a number of Beautiful Stars, that he hath given to the Moon its unconstant Motions with its wonderful influences, that he hath settled in the Sun such a bountiful source of Light, and that he hath appointed the unvariable succession of the seasons, of the Days, Months, and Years. It is for Man's advantage and lawful recreation, that so many Birds sing and fly in the open Air, that such prodigious numbers of Fishes swim in the Seas and Rivers; that the Earth is beautified with so many delicate Flowers; that it brings forth so many wholesome Herbs, and pleasant Fruits; that it nourisheth so many kinds of Animals, and engenders in its Bowels, Gold, Silver, and precious Stones. In a word, it is for Man's sake, that God hath created the World, and hath filled it full of so many Riches, and beautified it with so many excellent Perfections; Therefore it is no wonder if the Royal Prophet is ravished into an Holy Admiration, and bursts forth into these expressions. *O God, what is mortal Man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man that thou dost regard him? Thou hast made him a little lesser than the Angels, thou hast Crowned him with Glory and Honour, Thou hast establish'd him Governor over the Works of thine Hands; Thou hast put all things under his Feet, the Sheep, and the Oxen, the Beasts of the Fields, the Birds of the Heavens, and the Fishes of the Sea.* If the example of this great Prophet hath not power sufficient to stir you up, and perswade you to the fear and Worship of God, by the consideration of the wonderful Works of the Creation; Hear what the Angel declares, who took his flight through the middle of the Heavens, having the Eternal Gospel in his hand; *Fear God and give him Glory, worship him that liveth for ever and ever, for he hath made the Heavens and the Earth, the Sea, and the Fountains of Waters.*

16. We have not only in God our Life, Motion and Being, but he hath not left himself without witness, in doing good and sending Rains from Heaven, fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with Food and Joy. He doth nourish us with his Manna, and gives us to drink of his abundance; he overshadows us with his Protection, and enlightens us with his Heavenly Fires; He hath always his Eyes open to our Miseries, and his Ears to our Sighs and Groans: He is always near them that call upon him; yea, them that call upon him faithfully. Let us therefore say as *David*, I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my Supplication, for he hath enclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him all the days of my life, *Psal. 14. Psal. 116.*

17. Meditate often upon the advantages that are common to thee with the rest of Christians, and upon the Blessings and Favours which God hath vouchsafed to thy Person in particular. Remember how many times he hath sent his assistance from above, how he hath wrought Miracles to deliver thee from the Evils that did threaten thee: Consider how liberal he hath been to thee in the whole course of thy life, what admirable and noble means he hath employed to crown thee with his most precious Favours, then thou wilt say with *Jacob*, O God, *I am not worthy of the least of all thy Mercies, and of all the Truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, Gen. 32.* And with *David*, Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful Works, which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are in us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; If I should declare and speak of them, they are more then can be numbred; and being ravish'd into an Holy Admiration, thou wilt say in the language of the same Prophet, O God, who is like unto thee, who when thou hadst made me see many distresses and evils, at last thou hast restored me to Life, and drawn me

out of the depths of the Earths, *Psal. 71. thou shalt increase my greatness again, thou wilt comfort me.* And elsewhere, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me? Psal. 116.*

18. The consideration of God's redeeming us, doth chiefly require us to deny our selves, and consecrate our selves to his service; for the Slave don't belong to himself, but to him that hath redeemed him and paid his ransom. As when God had deliver'd the Children of *Israel* from the bondage of *Egypt*, he gave unto them his Law and his Ordinances in Mount *Sinai*. Thus God hath redeemed us from the Tyranny of the Devil, of the World, of Sin, of Death, of Hell, and from the power of all our Enemies, that we might serve him without fear, in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our life, *Luk. 1.* He hath given himself a ransom for us, that we might become a peculiar people to him, given to good Works. *Tit. 2.* You are bought with a price, Glorify then God in your Bodies, and your Souls, that belong unto God, *1 Cor. 6.*

19. One love must kindle another; the Sacred Fire that is come from Heaven must enflame our hearts with an Holy Zeal for his Glory. God hath loved us so much that he hath given his Holy Son, that believing we might not perish, but have everlasting life. He hath nor spared him who is the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person. He hath deliver'd him to death for us, yea, to the ignominious death of the Cross. And is it not just that we should love him above all worldly things, a God so good and merciful? Is it not just that we should love nothing but him, and for his sake? Is it not reasonable that we should offer unto him our Bodies and Souls, as a Living and Holy Sacrifice, pleasing to his Eye? And if we have any Lust that offends him, is it not just that we should willingly leave it betimes, when it should

should appear as useful to us as our Hands and Feet, and as dear as the Apple of our Eyes? Whosoever he be that doth not deny himself, is not worthy of him, *Matt. 10.*

20. We must treat the body of Sin, which the Holy Scripture stiles the *Old man*, and the *First Adam*, almost in the same manner, as Christ the *New man*, and the *Second Adam* was treated upon the Cross, *Rom. 6.* Instead of flattering it, and seeking to satisfy its Lusts, we must deprive it of all its pleasures, make it drink Vinegar and Gall, tear its Head with Thorns, bind and chain its Affections, and nail them to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all its inordinate and brutish desires: Mortify therefore your Members that are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs, which is Idolatry, *Gal. 5. Coloff. 3.*

21. To live in sin, and to delight our selves in iniquity, is to frustrate, as much as in us lies, our good Lord, from that principal end which he designed in leaving, for a while, the Celestial Abode of his Glory and Immortality: for he is come into the World to destroy the works of the Devil. Now the chief Work of the Devil, the great Enemy of our Salvation, in which he takes most Delight and Glory, is Sin, with which he ensnares Mankind; for by Sin, Death and all kind of Calamities are enter'd into the World, *John 3. Rom. 5.*

22. It is to trample upon the only Son of God, to affront the Spirit of Grace, and esteem the Blood of the Covenant, a prophane thing; It is to destroy the Fruits of the Death and Passion of our good Redeemer, and pull down his Cross, for he hath carried out Sins in his Body upon the Cross, that dying unto Sin we might live unto Righteousness. He hath given himself for his Church, to sanctify it, and to render it a Glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any

such thing. If the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer sprinkled, did Sanctify the uncleanness of the Flesh, how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit, offer'd himself without spot to God, purge your Consciences from dead Works, to serve the living God? *Heb. 9.*

23. Our Lord and Saviour was not only Dead, but also buried, to teach us to bury also with him our sins, and shut up in his Sacred Tomb all our carnal Lusts. Don't you know, all ye that have been baptized in Jesus Christ, that you have been baptized in his Death? we are then buried with him in his death by Baptisme.

24. This Glorious Saviour is risen from the Dead, and hath left his Sepulchre with his Funeral Attire, to teach us to rise to newness of Life, and to leave in our Grave, that sin that encompasseth us, and the ties of our corruption that bind us so fast. To speak in *St Paul's* language, *As Jesus Christ is risen from the dead by the Glory of the Father, we also ought to walk in newness of life; for if we are made one Plant with him, by a conformity to his Death, we shall also be One, by a conformity to his Resurrection; and as Christ who is risen from the Dead, dies no more, Death hath no more Dominion over him. Likewise we ought not to apply our Members as instruments of iniquity unto sin, but we ought to apply them unto God, as being made alive from the dead, Rom. 6.* He is dead and risen again, that he might have dominion over the dead and the living; If any be in Jesus Christ, let him be a new Creature; old things are pasted away, behold, all things are become new, *Rom. 14. 2 Cor. 5.*

25. Jesus Christ after his Glorious Resurrection, is ascended up into Heaven, to lift up thither our Hearts, and to draw thither our affections, and to teach us to reform our manners, to live an Holy, Angelical, and Celestial life. If you are risen with Christ, seek those things

things that are above, where Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of God ; think upon things above, and not upon things upon Earth, *Coloss. 3.*

26. There is nothing in the World so lovely as Vertue ; It is the delight and pleasure of Heaven ; it is the Daughter of the living God, and the true and lively Image of our great Creator. O blessed decking of a Christian Soul, O rich and precious Ornament of God's Children ; O Heavenly Grace, what rare and strong Charms hast thou to win the Hearts and Affections of all all such as behold thy Perfect and Divine Beauty!

27. On the contrary, there is nothing so ugly and ill-favour'd as sin ; It is a woful Monster of Hell, and a frightful Image of Satan ; It is true, that it disguises it self, and takes a beautiful appearance, but if you lift up this borrowed Mask, you shall perceive the Devils fearful looks, and the depths of Hell.

28. Faithful Souls, weigh in the ballance of the Sanctuary, the fearful evils that sin hath brought into the World ; It hath blotted out God's Image, and defaced the Beauty of the Creation ; it hath put a division between Heaven and Earth, and kindled a grievous War between God and Man ; It is an heavy burden under which Nature it self groans, for because of sin, all Creatures sigh, and are in labour until now.

29. It continues yet its woful Effects, for it is Sin that grieves the Holy Spirit, that afflicts the Angels, that offends the Weak, that hardens the Ignorant, and that gives an occasion to the enemies of God, to blaspheme his Holy Name, and to curse his Gospel, *Rom. 8.* It is Sin that pleaseth the Devil, that rejoyceth Hell, that upholds the tottering walls of *Babylon*, that strengthens the Kingdom of the Prince of Darkness, and that causeth him to work with efficacy in the Hearts of the Children of Rebellion, *Eph. 2.*

30. Lift up your Eyes to the Cross of Jesus Christ, and you shall perceive how abominable sin is, for neither in Heaven nor on Earth, there could not be found an offering able to make expiation for it. God hath chosen rather to punish it in the person of his only begotten Son, than to leave it unpunished. O that the stain of sin is grievous and deep, seeing that nothing but the Blood of a God can wash and cleanse it!

31. When you meditate upon our Lords Death and Passion, make it not your business to cry out against Judas's Treason; the Pharisees envy, the People mutiny; don't lay the blame upon the Impiety of *Caiphas*, the unjustice of *Pilate*, or *Herod's* Scoffs and Jests, nor upon the cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers; but be angry against your own Sins, and let an Holy Displeasure rise in you against your iniquities and crimes. Say to yourselves, our sins, our sins alone have betrayed Christs innocent Body, bound and fastened the Lord of Glory to this ignominious Cross, and deliver'd him into the Executioners hands; our sins have Crown'd him with Thorns, nailed him to the wood, deliver'd to him Gaul and Vinegar to drink. In short, our sins have pierced his Hands and Feet, and open'd his Side. You would abhor the sight and acquaintance of the Hangman, that should have fastened your Father to the Gallows, and you would scorn to kiss his bloody hands; how much more abominable shall we be to God and his Holy Angels, if we do cherish and delight to entertain Sin, whereas we should be stirred up against it with an Holy Zeal, and an earnest desire of Revenge? Instead of nailing to the Cross this unmerciful paricide, and crushing to pieces this hellish Monster; if we feed and nourish it in our bowels, we shall then be guilty of crucifying afresh the Son of God, and of putting him to an open shame; guilty of trampling him under feet, and of esteeming the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith we were sanctified, an unholy thing.

32. Consider seriously the fearful effects that Sin produces in you ; have you never been sensible of the horrid and cruel torments of a poor Soul disturb'd with the sight of its crimes ? How sharp and piercing are the remorses of a Conscience, awaken'd from a prophane sleep ? It is a pain and an anguish that cannot be expressed ; it maketh our head to dissolve into water, our eyes to become a Fountain of Tears ; it causeth our Blood to be congeal'd, our Skin to become black, our Bones to be crack'd and broken : It is a common saying, that the punishment follows the sin close at the heels ; but imagine that it keeps always its company, and that it is a Rack and Torture that never leaves the guilty : for there is no peace for the wicked, saith my God, *Isai.* 48.

33. Whereas there is no satisfaction like unto that of a good Christian, who loves his God sincerely, and worships him in Spirit and in Truth ; There is no kind of delight to be compar'd to that of a regenerate Soul, that applies himself without hipocrisie to the works of Piety and Holiness, *John* 4. for the quiet of the Soul, and the peace of Conscience, are more worthy than great Treasures, than Scepters and Crowns. Therefore the wise *Solomon* tells us, that the Righteous man's Heart is a continual Feast, *Prov* 15. To perswade us that there is nothing like to this hidden Manna, to this Spiritual Food, that the world knows not, and to these Angelical and Divine Pleasures, the Holy Apostles inform us, that it is an unspeakable and glorious Joy, and a peace of God that passeth all understanding, *Phil.* 4.

34. If any Delight or Pleasure accompanies Vice, it is but in appearance superficial, as a dream it vanisheth away, for the Triumph of the wicked is of a short continuance, and the Joy of the hipocrite is but for a moment. There is always some Thorn, some Grief hidden, and secret in their laughter, their Heart is afflicted, and their Joy is cut, off by Sorrow, *Prov.* 14.

35. But the Holy Joys and Celestial Delights of one that fears God, and that worships him in purity and innocency of life, are solid and lasting, they cast a deep Root into the very bottom of our hearts, and enter into the Joynts and Marrow and disperse themselves all over the inward parts. The Gibbets, the Wheels, and the most grievous torments of this life, cannot pluck these joys from us, but they comfort the soul in the midst of the greatest distresses, and heal up the broken bones.

It is the French custom to break notable offenders upon a Cart-wheel.

36. the Worldlings become weary, tired with the accomplishment of their Lusts, and are afflicted at their greatest success; they loath at last, all their carnal sports, and their greatest sweetness turns into bitterness; we grow out of taste with the pleasures of sin, so that we begin to loath and abhor them. It is what Zophar intends to shew us, when speaking of the wicked, he saith, *His meat in his Bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him, he hath swallowed down Riches, and he shall vomit them up again, God shall cast them out of his belly,* Job 20.

37. It is otherwise with them who apply their hearts to the fear and service of God, and that find his Yoke easy and his burden Light, *Matth. 11.* They take great satisfaction in the ways of Righteousness, they run with an holy freedom to their happy end, and to the price of their spiritual Calling; the more they drink of the Waters of *Siloah*, the more they thirst; their Zeal is like an Holy Fire, that never saith that it is enough, *Prov. 10.* As the Prophet *Moses*, after that he had been 40 days and 40 nights conversing with God in his Holy Mountain, came down with a glorious Countenance, shining as bright as the Light, with two Tables of the Law in his hands; Likewise a Christian Soul that hath been lifted up to God by fervent Prayers, and been conversing with him in devout Meditations, cannot hide its spiritual

tual joys, and its unspeakable Delights ; it burns with an earnest desire of glorifying God, and of pleasing him in all things ; when the Apostle St. Peter saw our Saviour transfigured upon Mount *Tabor*, he was ravish'd and transported in such a manner, that he cryed out, *Lord, it is good for us to dwell here, let us make three Tabernacles ;* Thus the good Cristian who is enlightned from above, is never weary in the company of his God, when he should live several ages, he would not believe that he hath too much time to serve his Creator, to worship his Divine Majesty, and to refresh himself with the unspeakable pleasures of his presence. As the time of *Jacob's* service seemed to him but a few days, because of the love that he had for *Rachel* ; thus the days that we spend in the service of God, seem to be but of a few hours or moments, in case our love for God be earnest and sincere .

38. Represent unto your selves the fearful curse denounced against the wicked and the prophane, *Gen. 29.* they carry about them every where the Works of God's anger and just revenge ; they are the Objects of his hatred, and execrable to the publick ; they who flatter and fawn upon them most for their own advantage, do abominate and curse them in the bottom of their hearts ; and they who out of a servile fear, seem to honour and worship them in the light of the Sun, would be many times very joyful to daunce upon their Graves, and erect a Gallows to hang them thereon.

39. It is not so with good men ; they are honoured by God and Man, and their greatest Enemies admire their Vertues ; let us be never so poor and contemptible in the World, we are rich, and noble enough, if we fear God as we ought, and obey his Holy Will ; for the fear of the Lord is our chief Treasure, it is our Crown, our Diadem, and our greatest Ornament.

40. The wicked Man is frightened and troubled of his own accord, he trembles in the midst of his Guards,
and

and he flies when no man pursues, all things scare him, he is jealous, and distrusts his best friends, his Children are suspected, and in the embraces of his dearest Wife, he slumbers with an unquiet Soul.

41. It is otherwise with a good Man, he marcheth every where with an Head lifted up, and his Heart rejoiceth in a perfect tranquility of mind, for there is no Bulwark like that of a good Conscience; it is like a Wall of Brass, that abides and withstands the injuries of the times and seasons; He that fears God, is free from all other fears, *Psal. 125.* The finger of God that hath settled in his Soul, the dread of his Holy Name; banisheth all other apprehensions, *Psal. 112.* He is like Mount *Sion* that cannot be moved, he fears no ill report, his Soul is firmly settled upon God; in the midst of his greatest dangers, and violent storms, he saith with *David*, *the Lord is my light and my deliverance, of whom should I be affraid? the Lord is the strength of my life, whom then should I fear? O God, thou art a Buckler round about me, my Glory, and the lifter up of my Head, I have laid my self down, I have slept, and I have awak'd, for the Lord upholds me; I will not fear thousands of People when they should set themselves round about against me, when a whole Army should camp against me, my heart would never fear. Psal. 17.*

42. Let the wicked be never so great and honourable, and never so highly advanc'd in the world, their Fame shall perish Eternally. 'Tis to no purpose that they rear up stately Trophies, and fill whole Volumes with the remarkable passages of their lives, making the Marbles to speak forth their Praises, whatsoever they do, to render their Glory Eternal, their name shall be always abominable to God, and all his Holy Angels; and Mankind shall never remember it, but with curses and detestation: these infamous persons are like unto a stinking Lamp, that gives light for a time, but when it is put out, it is a most odious stink; they
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may be also compar'd to certain Devils that never go out of a place, without causing an ill smell to be behind them.

43. It is otherwise with good Men, their Fame shall flourish for ever, and like the Palm, the more Men press it down, the more it will rise; their name is Engraven in Heaven it self, in the Glorious Temple of Eternity, it shall always be blessed by God and the Angels of his Glory, and the example of their Christian Vertues shall remain after them, for a Model for their posterity, to imitate a faithful Christian; whose Soul is sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, is like to the Alabaster-box of Ointment, which when it was broken spilt upon our Saviour's Head a precious Liquor that perfum'd all the room, for such as one lives after this death; when his Body is broken and reduc'd to Ashes, his good name spreads abroad, to the Glory of God, and the edification of his Church. *Mary Magdalens* Perfume filled only the Chamber where they were sitting, and was soon spent; but the good Perfume of an innocent and Holy life, fills both Heaven and Earth, with a sweet scent, and continues for ever and ever.

44. I judge that another powerful means to withdraw us from Vice, and to induce us to Vertue, is to represent unto our selves at every moment, the Excellency and Dignity of our Calling, to take a delight in beholding with the Eyes of our Soul, the white Stone where our new Name is written, which none knows, but he who receives it. It is the noble and high quality of the Children of God, and of Believers, which he bestows upon none, but upon such whom he hath elected from all Eternity, for the eternal enjoyment of Bliss in his glorious Kingdom; It is reported of a certain young Prince, that when he had a design to disgrace himself by lustful actions and debauchery, a wise Philosopher

Iosapher reclaim'd from him his wicked purpose, by telling him, *Remember that thou art a Kings Son.* Thus you Christian Souls, when Satan, the Flesh, and the world, shall tempt you to filthy and unjust actions, or to any other sin, call to your remembrance, that you are the Children of the King of Kings. Take heed you defile not such a precious Crown, and as our Saviour said to him who should have followed him, but was desirous first to go and bury his Father, *suffer the dead to bury the dead*; likewise we say unto you devout Souls, who have consecrated your selves willingly unto God, and to his Service and Worship; cast away these vain and base actions, and all these dead works, leave them to such as are dead in their trespasses and sins; but for you, behave your selves according to your Celestial Calling, and apply your selves to Righteousness and Holiness, and to the practice of all other Vertues, as such who were dead, but now are made alive.

45. We must continually meditate upon the Holiness and Purity of our future abode in Heaven, and the expectation that we have there, *Rom. 6.* For as Jesus Christ is gone to prepare a place for us, in the House of his Heavenly Father, *John 14.* It is but just and reasonable that he should fit and prepare our Souls for such Holy and Glorious Mansions, *Revel. 21.* It is not possible to go to Heaven by treading the paths of Hell. Nothing impure nor filthy, shall enter into the Holy City, which is the new *Jerusalem*: As in *Solomon's Temple*, there was no way to the Holy of Holies, but through the Sanctuary; thus if we will one day enter into the Heavenly Sanctuary where Christ dwells, the true Ark of the Covenant, and the mercy seat, *Eph. 2.* It is absolutely necessary, that we should tread in paths of good Works, which God hath prepared, that we should walk in them, *Tit. 2.* It is upon this consideration, that *St. Paul* grounds this exhortation to Piety and Christian Vertues, *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation,*

hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good Works; seeing that we have such promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filth of the Body, and of the Spirit, finishing our Sanctification in the fear of God, 1 Cor. 7. St. John makes use of the same reason, to perswade us to Holiness, Beloved, we are now the Children of God, but what we shall be, doth not yet appear; now we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be made like unto him, for we shall see him as he is, and whosoever hath this hope in him, let him purify himself as he is pure, 1 Joh. 2. The Apostle St. Peter employs the same consideration to kindle in our hearts this pure and Celestial fire, We, according to his promise, look for new Heavens, and new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness; wherefore beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace without spot, and blameless, 2 Pet. 3.

46. You know, Christians, that God created our first Parents, in his own Image and Likeness, before that he brought them into his own terrestrial Paradise; there is a greater reason, that this Divine Image should be imprinted in our Souls, before we enter into the Celestial Paradise; unto this the Apostle hath a regard when he tells the Ephesians, be ye renewed in the Spirit of your mind, and put on the new Man, created according to God in Righteousness and true Holiness, Chap. 4.

47. If the place of our future Abode, unto which we are designed, doth require from us Sanctification, the quality of the persons with whom we shall spend an Eternity doth no less oblige us to the same behaviour, for they shall be Angels of Light, and the Blessed Saints who have wash'd and whitened their Robes, in the Blood of the Lamb, Revel. 5. It is a glorious Church

Church that hath neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, *Eph. 5.* It is the Spouse of the Son of God, cloathed in fine Linnen, clean and white which are the Righteousness of the Saints, *Revel. 19.* St. Paul had this same consideration, when he saith, *That we are fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houshold of God, and That our conversation ought to be as becometh Citizens of Heaven.* To wean us from the the filthy Deeds of the Flesh, and from the prophane disposition of *Esau*, he employs the same reason to perswade us, in the 12 of the *Heb.* *You are come, saith he, to the Mount Sion, to the City of the living God, the Celestial Jerusalem, to the thousands of Angels, and to the Assembly and Church of the first-born, who are written in Heaven, and to the Spirits of the Just sanctified.*

48. As it is with a Child in his Mothers womb, he begins to live there the same life, that he leads when he is come into the World; likewise the Christian ought to begin to live in the same manner upon earth as he hopes to live for ever in Heaven; if we will live and Reign with Christ above in his Kingdom, we must at present have him Live and Reign in our Hearts here below by faith.

49. The chief happiness of Man consists not only in the true knowledg of God, and of him whom he hath sent to save us, or in the Spiritual Peace, nor Celestial Transports of the Holy Spirit, but it consists in Holiness, without which none shall see God, *John 17. Rom. 5.* Therefore the Apostle inquires from the Romans of his time, *What fruit had yon in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, but now being free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the end everlasting life, Heb. 12. Rom. 6.*

50. I find also, that this is a very good remedy to keep our selves free from the Debaucheries and Corruptions of the Age, to abstain from the company and acquaintance of vicious persons, for as he who did touch things

things unclean, did become thereby unclean, and as such as haunt amongst the sick of the Plague, are infected with their Disease; Likewise it is the property of evil company to corrupt the best manners, 2 Cor. 15.

§1. Whereas we should accustom our selves to the company and acquaintance of good Men, and Delight in the society of such, who like the Seraphims, excite and enflame one another, to glorify God, and sing forth his praises, we must frequent such unto whom we desire to be like; for as *Jacob's* Sheep Owned Lambs, spotted and marked, as the Rods upon which they did cast their eyes; Thus if we have our joys fixed upon the Holy examples of Piety and vertue, we shall see our selves insensibly transformed into their Image and Resemblance; we must delight our selves in the company of them with whom we hope to live for ever in the highest Heavens.

§2. The most powerful, and the most effectual means to oblige us to the practice of Piety and of Holiness, and purity of Life, it is to look with the eyes of faith upon him who is invisible, and to represent unto our selves the great world as a large Temple where he dwells; Let the voice that came unto *Moses* out of the burning Bush, sound continually in our ears, and in our mind; *Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground, Exod. 6.* Cast off there thy base and earthly affections, and renounce thy sottish and filthy Lusts, for thou art always before my eyes, that are too clean and pure to suffer the sight of evil, and the place where thou standest is sanctified by my presence, *Heb. 1.* Remember that I see thine Heart, that I search thy Reins, and that I read thy most secret thoughts, *Revel. 2.* Christian souls imagine that God calls unto you from Heaven continually, as he did unto *Abraham, Walk before me and be perfect, Gen. 17.* Let therefore the dread of this Divine Majesty, seize upon thee and possess thee. When
Potipher's

Potiphar's Wife tempted chaste *Joseph* to defile himself with Adultery, she perceived nothing in the room but this object of her Lust; but this Holy man perceives the Glorious Godhead between him and this lascivious Woman; he perceives God's Eye, that seeth into the greatest depths: This made him break out into this expression, *How can I do this thing and sin against God?* Thus, if our Flesh tempts us, and if the vicious and prophane intice us into secret and shameful retreats, to share in their filthy crimes, Let us then remember, that God is every where, and wheresoever we hide our selves, God hath an Ear to hear us, an Eye to see us, an Hand to record our Deeds, Words, and Thoughts; God is all Ear, all Eye, and all Hand: he discovers us as easily under the dark shadows of the night, as at break of day he spies us through our fig-leaves, and beholds us in our most subtle disguises; he understands our most inward thoughts, and listens to the silent language of our Hearts; he searcheth into all the Closets of our Souls, and into all the foldings and windings of our Consciences: In a word, all things are naked, and altogether open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do. An Antient Philosopher did perswade such as desired to be vertuous, to chuse some grave and vertuous person, and so represent him always in their presence, and to live as in their sight, *Seneca*. We need not represent unto our selves imaginary appearances, for in every place where we are, and what ever we can do or think, we are always in the sight of the Holy of Holies, who is both our Witness and our Judge; It was *David's* Meditation when he cried out, *O Lord, whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whether shall I fly from thy presence? If I mount up to Heaven thou art there, if I go down into the pit thou art there also; if I take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the Sea, thither shall thine hand guide me, and thy right hand uphold me; If I say, the*
darkness

darkness shall cover me, behold, the night shall be like light round about me, darkness shall not hinder me from thee, and the night shall shine as the day, the night and the day are to thee alike.

53. If the Devil and the World have ensnared us in their Nets, and if we have been unhappily lul'd asleep in the Bosom of some deceitful pleasure. This consideration alone, that God sees and understands us, is able to awake us with an Holy dread and fear, Let therefore the words of *St. Paul* Sound continually in our minds, *Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee; or Awake to Righteousness and sin not; Eph. 5. 1 Cor. 15.* Truly if we be not stupified and besotted above measure; This dreadful voice that God thunders from Heaven, is able not only to awake us from the sleep of iniquity, but to oblige us also to cry out with *Jacob, God is here, and I knew it not! O that this place is dreadful! it is the house of God; it is the Gate of Heaven, Gen. 28.* Alsoon as *Peter* had taken notice of our Saviours looks, that were cast upon him, he went out of the High Priests Hall, and wept bitterly for his Apostacy; Thus, if we could but perceive and acknowledge, that God casts his eye continually upon us, we should repent of our Vices, and our Hearts would quickly melt into Tears of Contrition.

54. And because it is sometimes necessary to retain our selves with an Holy awe, and to withdraw our selves out of Lust, as out of the Fire; you Religious Souls, keep always in your mind a short Collection of the Judgements of God, that have happened from time to time, upon all manner of Sinners; Consider how God dealt with the Celestial Spirits, who have not kept their original purity, they are reserv'd for utter darkness, and for eternal Chains, until the great day of Judgement, and say unto your selves, If God hath not spared the Apostate Angels, will he spare Man that rebels against him, and offends him with delight?

remember the dreadful fall of our first Parents, who although they had been fashioned with Gods own hand, and instructed by himself, have lost both themselves and all their posterity, by listening to the deceitful suggestions of the Old Serpent. Cast your thoughts upon the first wicked World that was destroyed by a Deluge, and upon the Cities of *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zebolim*, upon whom fell the Fire and Brimstone of Gods hot displeasure. Look upon *Pharaoh*, and the *Egyptians* overwhelmed with all their pride, in the waves of the *Red Sea*. Consider the three thousand that were kill'd with the *Levites* Swords, because of the Idolatry of the Golden Calf; and the four and twenty thousand, whom a suddain death swept away because they went a whoring after *Paal-Peor*. Look with fear upon the burning Serpents of the Wilderness, that did cast their poison upon the Murmurers against God, and their Superiors upon the Earth, that open'd its mouth to swallow *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; upon that Heavenly Fire that consum'd *Nathan* and *Abihu*, who offered strange Fire unto the Lord; upon the Bears that went out of the Forrest to devour two and forty young Rascals, who mock'd *Elisha* the Prophet; upon the Lion that devour'd the Prophet, who disobey'd Gods command, and harkened to a lying Brother. In short, cast your eyes with astonishment upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, feeding amongst the Beasts of the field, *Jezabel* eaten up by Dogs, *Agrippa* consumed with Worms, and the rich Miser burning in the flames of Hell, *Dan.* 4. *2 Kings* 9. *Acts* 12. *Luke* 16.

45. Above all things, think upon the last Judgement and consider this last day, in which we must all appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ, to receive in our Bodies that which we shall have done, whether it be good or evil; remember that in this dreadful day God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, the
secret

secret contrivances and thoughts of the Heart ; before this Throne of Fire, the Books shall be opened, not only God's Books, where all our Sins and Impieties are Registered, but also the Books of our Consciences where the frightful Image and grievous remorse of Conscience will appear. In the day of this glorious coming, the Heavens shall melt, the Elements shall be dissolved, the Earth and all its works shall be burn'd with fire, and every man shall give an account of every Idle word, how much more of every wicked action, and prophane discourse? *Matt. 5. 12.*

56. That we may not be confounded nor ashamed in this fearful day, in which God will judge the world by the man whom he hath ordained ; Let us be inwardly perswaded, that it is not sufficient to abstain from outward sins, but we must also hate, and inwardly abhor them, *Acts 17.* For as the Leopard in Chains leaves not his Skin nor his Spots, and changes not for all his restraint his rapacious and cruel nature, for it continues nevertheless to be a Leopard ; and as a Theif in Fetters shut up in a Dungeon, remains a Theif in his heart and disposition ; likewise such as abstain from exterior sins, for fear of Man, and the severity of the Laws, are nevertheless esteem'd to be vicious and abominable in the sight of God, and of his Holy Angels ; if every time that he thinks upon his crimes, he is not moved with a true contrition, and an inward abhorrency of his soul, to abominate them. The best means to render our Conscience whole, is to tear it in pieces with the sorrows of repentance.

57. It is not sufficient to abstain from the thoughts, words, and actions that God prohibits, but we must also apply our selves to the study of true Piety, of Vertue, and generally of all the good Works that God requires : for as the Praise and Honour of a good Bow-man is never bestowed upon one who hath only the skill of not breaking his Bow, his Arrows, or his Quiver :

but to him who strikes the mark, and aims well, and he is not to be reckoned a good Artift, who works not ill, becaufe he doth nothing at all, but he who works well and fhews excellent pieces of workmanfhip: likewife he is not to pafs for a good and Religious Chriftian who only abftains from evil, and commits no outward fins, but he who doth good, and applies himfelf to Vertue: every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, although it bears no evil Fruit, is hewen down, and caft in the Fire, *Matt. 2.* our Saviour curs'd the Fig-tree, not becaufe that it brought forth evil Fruits, but becaufe it brought forth no good Fruit, but was altogether barren. The wicked fervant was caft out into utter darknefs, where there is weeping and gnafhing of teeth, not becaufe he had loft, or mifpent his Talent, but becaufe he had not employed it well, and turned it to his Lords advantage, *Matt. 25.* Not only fuch fhall be condemned to the Flames, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, who afflict God's Children on Earth, and fpill the blood of his fervants; but fuch as have not cloathed his Members, vifited and comforted them, nor given them to eat and drink. In fhort, if you enquire from the rich Mifer, how he comes to be condemned to Hell, tortured in the Flames, he will not tell you it was becaufe he took what was not his own, or becaufe he committed no Murders, Violences, and other horrid Deeds, but becaufe he lived without Charity, and had no pity of the poor.

58. And becaufe God requires, that we fhould proceed daily forward, until we be come to the meafure of the perfect ftature in our Lord Jefus Chrift, we muft very frequently take a view of our former life, and feel the pulse of our Lufts, to fee whether they be not more fervent and violent than before, whether the old Man continues to decline, and how much we have gain'd upon our wicked affections, and reformed our corrupt difpofition; for as thofe who fwim againft
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the stream, if they slack but a little, are carried downwards by the violence of the Current. Likewise if we employ not all our strength to swim up to our Heavenly Source, Integrity, and Perfection; the torrent of our Lusts, and of evil Customs, will hurry us down into the deep Abyss of Death, and Eternal Destruction; we must therefore often examine every day, what progress we have made in piety and Holiness; and whether since so many years that God speaks to us and instructs us to discover to us what is pleasing to him if we have more Piety, Zeal and Charity, and more Holiness, than before; we must imitate the solicitous care of such as have transplanted some rare plant of the *East*, in this *Northern* climate; they have always the eye upon it, to take notice of every thing that happens to it. We must purpose for our example a Steward who hath a great account to make us, he looks often upon his Memorials and his Registers. An Heathen Philosopher was highly prais'd, because he did never lay himself down to sleep, until he had well examin'd what progress he had made in Philosophy, and Moral Vertue: Likewise a good Christian should never cast himself upon his Bed to sleep at night, until he hath seriously considered how he hath proceeded forward in Piety, and the love of God: In a word, a true Christian by this means shall never be less alone, than when he is alone; for then he shall entertain himself with his God, and shall discover unto him his Heart, and his most secret thoughts, then he shall speak seriously unto his Soul, and shall examine exactly his Conscience, then he will look to his wicked deeds, to weep and lament for them with Tears of a sincere repentance, then he will cast himself upon the infinite Mercy and Goodness of his God, to embrace it with a lively Faith and assurance; then he will make a reflexion upon Gods Commands, to walk in them with an Holy Zeal and Earnestness all the days of his life.

59. Amongst these directions that I intend to give to him that desires to apply himself to the practice of Piety, and to abandon Vice; I must not forget this advice, that he must never satisfy his carnal Lusts and Pleasures, but he should rather check and bridle them; for when we grant them what they desire, we are so far from extinguishing the feavorish Flames, and satisfying these hellish longings, that we do but increase and encourage them the more; as he that loves Money is not satisfied with Money: and as the ambitious is never exalted high enough in Honour: Thus the lustful Worldling is never contented with the fullest enjoyment of the carnal pleasures; It is a Fire that kindles another, and a Flame that never saith *It is enough*. These filthy Lusts are like the Serpent that stings the bosom of the person that warms it in his Breast; or as the Furnace of *Babylon* that burnt up those who had first lighted it: for such as entertain the Flames of their fleshly Lusts, they keep in their bosoms a Fire, that will at last burn and totally consume them.

60. We must resist the first motions of the Flesh, and with the shield of Faith, extinguish the first enflamed Darts of the Devil; for as it is very easy to put out the first sparkles of an increasing fire, but if we neglect or cherish it, it may come to be a fearful burning; and as we can without pain pluck up with one hand a young Tree planted but a few days, but if we suffer it to take root, and to get strength, we shall not be able to pluck it up with both our hands, but must be forced to employ the Axe, the Wedge, and the Saw. Likewise, if we resist sin in its beginning, we shall easily overcome and tame it; we shall put out without labour these first beginnings of a strange fire, and we shall pull up with ease this bitter plant that will grow to our sorrow; but if we suffer this infernal Fire of Lust to increase, all the Water of the Sea will not be able to extinguish it; and if we give leave to this cursed Plant

to grow, it will never be pluckt up without much sweat and labour; Sin never begins by the same means that it ends, and it discovers not all its poison at once; As the Child in his Mothers Womb is not made in an instant: Thus this Monster of Satan is formed by degrees, one Chain ~~of~~ link'd into another, when Lust hath conceived it brings forth sin: from the thoughts proceed the suggestion, and from the suggestion pleasure and delight, and from delight consent, and after consent then follows the deed, which begets the Habit; from thence, the sinner proceeds to be hardened in a custom of sin; thus the Devil aggravates the yoke of Tyranny, and of our Bondage, and strengthens the tye and chains, by which he drags us into eternal damnation.

61. As amongst the Planets, there is always one that rules and causeth its influences to be felt upon earth, more than the rest; thus among Sins and Lusts, there is always some one or other that rules in us, unto which we are more addicted, than to the rest by a natural propensity; unto this therefore we must chiefly take heed; here we must declare our strength and industry, for fear that the Devil should employ it as a means to enter into our Souls, and establish there his Tyranny; we must imitate the wise and valient Captains, who having a place to defend against a vigelent and an active Enemy, do fortify the places that are naturally, the weakest, and furnish them with the best Soldiers, causing there a watchful and continual Guard to be kept. Christian Souls be sure you take all the Armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having overcome all, that ye may continue stedfast, *Eph. 6.*

62. We must not neglect any sin, nor imagine that there are some light and unconsiderable, that God regards them not, for a little Leaven, seasons and Leavens the whole Lump, and the least dead Fly corrupts and causeth several confections to bubble up and spoil.

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The least scratch may cause a feavourish Inflammation, and but little poison can lay us in our graves; The Devil cares not by what Gate he enters into our Souls, and by what tye he takes hold of our Hearts; This cursed Serpent slides through the least and the narrowest crannies and holes of the House, as "—" as through the widest Gates. Christian Souls, give not place to the Devil, but shut your Ears to all his enchantments.

64. We must not only eschew all manner of sins, and abstain from all appearance of evil, but for our better security, that we may not endanger our Salvation, we must take heed of all those things whereof our Souls are doubtful, and upon which our consciences cannot resolve. We must never do any thing, but we must be fully perswaded, that it is acceptable unto God and agreeable to his Holy Will; for *Whatsoever is done without Faith, is sin.*

64. As those who intend to stop the current of a running water, are wont to cut for it a new Channel and Gutter; thus if your vicious Lusts and Passions are too violent, you must divert them, and propose unto your selves new and fresh objects. Are you Cholerick? be angry and sin not, fret and fume against your own Sins and Lusts, and crush in pieces these Children of *Babel*. Are you oppressed with sadness and grief? Let the causes of your sadness be your offences against God, and the scandals of his Church. Are you furious and violent? Remember to be of the number of those blessed violent persons, who ravish the Kingdom of God by violence. Are you inclined to Covetousness? Covet and be greedy for the Riches and Treasuries of Heaven. *Matt. 21.* Are you lifted up with ambitious thoughts? Let your ambitious aim be to raise you upon the immortal Throne, and to attain to the uncorruptible Crowns of Glory. Are you lustful, and given to your pleasures? Labour to enjoy the Divine and ravishing Delights of the Holy Spirit, and medi-

meditate often upon the eternal pleasures that are reserved for you in Heaven.

65. Devout Souls, who sigh and groan for your infirmities, who labour to attain to perfection, apply yourselves to read and meditate upon God's Holy Word, with a Religious attention, and before you enter into this Holy Reading, say with the Prophet *David*, *Lord open mine eyes, and I shall see the wonders of thy Law*, *Psal. 119*. Inreat your good God to open your Hearts as he did *Lydia*, to receive this uncorruptible Seed of your Regeneration, and that he may give you a filial obedience, *Acts 16*. In such a case, as soon as you shall hear the Lords voice, you will find your Souls enflamed with his Holy Love, *1 Pet. 1*. When we do but only behold a beautiful countenance, we become not more beautiful thereby, nor do we take from it its excellent features, *2 Cor. 3*. but it is otherwise with us, who behold as in a Glass openly, the Glory of the Lord; we are transformed thereby into the same image of his Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

66. Take pleasure to meditate often upon God's wonderful works, and to sing forth his Praises. The Spiritual Songs inspired by the Holy Ghost, do commonly appease all the evil notions of our mind, and beget in us an Holy Joy, and Celestial Peace; as when *Saul* was tormented with a wicked Spirit, *David* was appointed with his Harp to play before him, and by that means he quieted his troubled mind. Likewise, when Hatred, Anger, Revenge, Coveteousness, Ambition or Lust, or any other of the unruly passions, which are as so many evil Spirits that disturb and torture our Souls within us; we must seek a remedy from *David's* Harp, and sing unto the Lord in Spiritual Songs and Hymns.

67. We must carefully attend at all the publick exercises of Devotion, and not leave off the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is; for
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where there are but two or three met together, in the name of Jesus Christ, he is there in the midst of them. *St. Thomas*, who was not with the Apostles when Christ first appeared amongst them, lost the comfort then of seeing him risen from the dead; And if this merciful Redeemer had not had compassion of him, he had perished in his unbelief for ever. If upon the day of Pentecost, any of the faithful had been found absent from the Holy company of the Faithful in *Jerusalem*; they had not seen the Glorious appearance of the Holy Ghost; who knows but in a Sermon that we have neglected, we have lost some pious advice, some seasonable exhortation, by which God might have brought our hearts to repentance? Who knows, but instead of that Fire that devours us, we might have felt the Holy Flames kindled in us, like unto those Flames of the burning Bush, that would burn in us and not consume us? Who knows but at the breaking up of the Assembly, we might have said as the two Disciples of Christ going to *Emmaus*, *Did not our heart burn within us when he spoke to us and opened the Scriptures?*

68 We must be fervent, zealous and persevering in Prayers and other Holy Duties, and embrace our Lord and Saviour with the Armes of Faith and Repentance, and say unto him as *Jacob*, *I shall not leave thee until thou hast blessed me*; especially, we ought to apply our selves to these blessed exercises, when we feel the inward and troublesome strugglings of the Flesh against the Spirit; we must imitate that Holy and vertuous Woman, who feeling two Children stirring in her womb, fell to her Prayers, and unburdened her sorrows in the Bosom of our Heavenly Father. And as *St. Peter* when he began to sink lifted up his Hands in Prayer, saying, *Lord save me*, *Matth. 14*. Likewise we who walk upon this dangerous Sea of the World, as soon as we feel our selves sinking into the Delights of the World, or as soon as the Waves of vicious examples and

and dangerous customs do hurry us away; Let us cry out from the bottom of our Hearts, O merciful God, stretch out thine hand from above, and deliver me from these waters of Hell that carry me away; accomplish thy vertue in mine infirmities, and give me grace in resisting against sin, to resist unto Blood, *Psal. 69. Heb. 50. 2 Cor. 22.* Let thine Holy Spirit overcome mine, let Heaven command the Earth, and let Paradiſe lead Hell in Triumph. If we make this Petition with all our Hearts, God will grant it from his Holy Sanctuary; He will extinguish the Fire that burns us, He will shut the Lions mouth that intends to devour us, He will appease the Winds and the Storms that the Devils have raised in us, and at his first entrance into our Ship, tost up and down with fears and apprehensions, he will bring Peace and a blessed tranquility, and will lead us to the safe Haven of Eternal Happiness; as the Prophet *Moses*, when he had been familiar with God, came down from the Mountain with a shining countenance; and as our Saviour when he was in Prayer upon Mount *Tabor*, was transfigured, his Garments were white as the Light, and his Face appeared as glorious as the Sun; Likewise if we lift up our selves above all these earthly and corruptible things, and pray unto God with an Holy earnestness and Zeal, we shall see that our Souls shall be thereby cloathed with Holiness, and full of Glory and Light; they will be transformed into the blessed Image of the great God whom we adore, for as soon as we behold him, we become enlightened.

69. To the end that we may tame this Body, and reduce it to obedience, and to overcome all our wicked and dangerous Lusts, *Psal. 69. 34.* It is necessary that we should joyn Fasting to our Prayers: we must not always expect a time appointed by the Rulers of our Church upon solemn occasions, but we must order unto our selves a Fast, according as we shall see it expedient and useful; for if this Flesh is unruly, it is rebellious
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against God and his Holy Commandments, if because it is fed in Ease and Plenty, it is Lustful, Impure, and Insolent ; Let us cut off from it all its dainties, and labour to mortify it by Fastings and abstinence, and remember what our Saviour Christ saith in the Gospel, *That there are some evil spirits that are not to be driven out but by Fasting and Prayer*, Matth. 27.

70. If God gives us the Grace to overcome Sin and weaken our Lusts, by fervent and earnest Prayers, and by austere Fasting, and hot tears of Repentance, and by the assistance of his Divine Spirit, that will pour his Blessings upon our Devotions; take heed that we become not careless and negligent in good Works; deceive not your selves Religious Souls, and be not surprized, for many times the old Man looks as if he were dead, that we might not offer to strike him again to the Heart, and give him the last blow, that he may recover more strength ; there is always in the Ashes something of that infernal Fire, that is able to do much mischief. Lust is not rooted out so perfectly, but that there remains some strings in our Hearts that may grow again. This source of Iniquity is not so dry, but that it may run afresh. As it is during the time of Peace ; Men exercise themselves in feats of Arms, and prepare new Armor for the War ; Likewise during the calm and rest of our Souls, we must prepare some Armor for our Spiritual warfare ; And as it is not sufficient to win a place by Assault, and to have driven out the Enemies Forces, but we must also watch day and night, and keep a constant, and a strong Guard, that we may not be surprized and driven out again. Thus when we have forced out the Devil, and banish'd him out of our Hearts, we must be always upon our Guard, and stop all the Avenues, for fear that this evil Spirit should come upon us accompanied with seven worse Spirits, and that our last condition should be worse than the first.

71. To these Works of Piety and Devotion, in which we cannot be always employed ; we must remember to add a lawful Calling, for Idleness is the Mother of all Vices ; when we are doing nothing, the Devil prompts us to evil ; this happened to *David*, a man after God's own heart, for when he gave himself over contrary to his former practice, to an unworthy idleness, whilst he was looking into his neighbors House, the Devil entered into his Heart, and by the assistance of a Lustful Object, inflamed his Soul with an unlawful desire : as the Iron that is not used becomes Rusty , as the standing Water putrefies, and as the Earth that is not manured, and begets insects and venomous Serpents. Likewise a Soul that is not employed, is soon covered over with the rust of Vice : It is easily drag'd along into the corruption of the age, and apt to beget and bring forth Monsters ; therefore the Prophet *Ezekiel* examines the very beginning and first spring of *Solomon's* Sin, saying, *That it was the plenty of Bread, Ease, and Idleness*, Ezek. 16. Christians, if you desire to keep your Souls pure and undefiled, that the Holy Spirit may Reign in them, give no entertainment to the Devil, let him find you always well employed, and let him never see you at leisure, to assault you with his hellish temptations, *Eph. 4.*

72. After all, we must seriously think upon death, and represent it always before our eyes ; for as a Pilate that will govern and steer the course of this life as we ought, we must consider our latter end, live always as if we were ready to dye, and to breath forth the last gasp ; therefore this Sentence is worthy to be Engraven upon Cedar in Golden Characters, *What ever thou sayest, or what ever thou doest, remember thy latter end, and thou shalt never sin*, Eccl. 7.

Wonder not, Christian Souls, if in this Treatise, where I am to furnish you with Remedies, against the fears of Death : I would have death itself to be
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Remedy against Sin, for these things are united and linked together, or rather they hold one another by the hand; for as a good and Holy Life is a safe preparation to an happy Death; Likewise Death is a strong motive to oblige us to live well, for there is none, unless it be a brutish and a furious Varlot, but at the hour of Death laments at the consideration of his former wicked Life, and grieves that he hath not applied himself to the fear of God, and to the practice of Christian Vertues. If a Malefactor, after that he is condemn'd to dye, and hath heard the Sentence of his doom, did mind nothing but drinking and playing, and neglect Prayer and Repentance by which such an one is to dispose himself to go to God, every one would wonder at him, as at a Monster and a Madman; Likewise if we consider as we ought, that Death is certain and unavoidable, and that God hath pronounced the Sentence in his anger, and that not one shall be excepted; this will be able to withdraw us from Vice, and to perswade us to Holiness, without which none shall see God, *Heb. 12.* Therefore at every moment, when Satan, the World, our own Flesh, shall solícite us to any evil action, let us think within our selves, would I have death find and seize upon me in this employment? Am I in a good disposition to go thus unto my God, and to appear before his Tribunal? Jesus the Son of *Syrac* had well consider'd this when he pronounc'd this excellent Sentence, which I could wish were engraven in the Soul of every Christian, *Remember thy latter end, and thou shalt not sin.*

We must therefore live in the World without being guilty of its corruptions and abominations: As the Fish preserves its sweetness in the midst of the Salt Waves of the Sea; and as the Sheep never learn to bark nor to bite, although they be always with Dogs; Likewise, although our conversation be in the World amongst the prophane and vicious Men of this Age,

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we must not imitate their filthy Words, their Oaths, their Blasphemies, and less Reason have we to follow their wicked and abominable Deeds; we must live among them as *Lot* lived in the City of *Sodom*, as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, as *Daniel* in *Babylon*. Blessed and Holy is he who hath part in the first Resurrection, the second Death shall have no power upon him.

When *Jacob* by God's Command went to *Bethel*, he commanded his Wives, his Children, and all that were with him, *Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your Garments, and let us arise and go up to Bethel, Gen. 33. And I will make there an Altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.* Then they delivered into *Jacob's* hands, all the strange gods that were in their possession, and he hid them under an Oak in *Sechem*. Thus before we go to the true *Bethel*, to the dwelling where we shall eat our fill of the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, before you offer unto God the Sacrifice of our Souls, you must, if you be true Christians, renounce Sin, and all wicked Lusts, which have been formerly your Idols; I shall desire of you willingly, that you would bury them deep in this base Earth; but you had better do as God Commands you from Heaven, *Trample under foot all these abominable Vices, and all these worldly Lusts that are to you as so many false gods that you worship, Ezek. Put away from before me these Idols of jealousy that provoke me to jealousy, and sanctify this Temple of my Holiness.* Cleanse your hands ye Sinners, and sanctify your selves ye double-minded; put off the Old man with all his Deeds, and put on the New man created according to the Image of God, Righteousness and true Holiness, and then you shall be admitted to the Holy Temple of my Glory, to offer unto me in the innumerable Companies of Saints, the acceptable perfume of Praises and Thanksgivings, *Jam. 4. Eph. 4.*

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This is a Duty so just and necessary, that natural reason it self, enlightened by Grace, acknowledges it to be so; nay the most wretched Varlets are constrain'd to give Glory to God, and to condemn themselves; they confess that they are indebted to the Divine Majesty, but the payment of this debt they put off from day to day, and when ever you come to them, they are ready to demand a delay, they acknowledge their faults, the hainiousness of their Crimes, and the necessity of Repentance, but they are always putting off Repentance and Reformation of life; As when a sluggard is newly awak'd out of his sleep, he desires *yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep*, Prov. 24. Thus vvhenever Death appears, the voluptuous are yet requesting to enjoy their carnal Delights; vvhhen the Lords Messengers are calling upon us to repair the breaches that the Devil hath made in our Souls, vve could vvillingly answer as the Jevvs did to the Prophet, *That the time is not come that the Lord's house should be built*, Hag. 1. The young man in his Youth and Strength is apt to say, that it is not yet time to busy himself about Wisdom and Reformation, and that when he comes to be old, he will then repent of the sins of his Youth; and the old man he endeavours to put his Repentance until the hour of his departure: He expects to make then a general confession of all his crimes, to satisfy all his neighbors, and to restore what he possesseth so unjustly. In short, all men in general do flatter themselves in their evil courses, and most are so extravagant, as to be perswaded, that vvhhen they have lived in sin and iniquity all their life, mispent God's Blessings, abused his Mercies, a Tear or a Sigh at the time of our Death vvill make a sufficient amends for all, and that he vvill be fully satisfied, if vve say then as the prodigal Child, *My Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee*. Or as the good Thief, *Lord remember me*, Luk. 15. Luk. 23.

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I have much to say against so great a mistake, so dangerous and prophane a perswasion? First, what reason have we to believe that God will accept our Repentance, when we cannot endure to accept of his Graces and Redemption; that he will hear our Sighs, and grant our Prayers, when we will by no means give ear to his voice, nor obey the Command that he sends us of Repenting?

Wretched Man! dost thou stay to glorify God till the moment when thy breath shall fail thee? Is it just that thou shouldest then begin to serve him, when thou shalt be able to serve and please thy flesh no longer, nor satisfy thy foolish Lusts?

This great God who had Commanded, during the Shadows and Types of *Moses* Law, that the Children of *Israel* should offer unto him their First-born, and the First-Fruits of their Inheritances, will he take it well now in this admirable Sun-shine of the Gospel, that thou shouldest offer to the Devil, and to the World, the First-Fruits of thy Youth, the strength of thy years, and that thou shouldest reserve for him only the dregs and the corruption of a decaying old age?

It is to mock God and Man to dream of living well when our life is far spent and gone. To lift up our Eyes and Thoughts to Heaven, when the Earth fails us under our feet. To restore other mens Goods, when we can keep them no longer. To renounce all desires of Revenge, when we have no power of being revengeful. To abstain from the foul Lusts of the Flesh, when we are able to continue in them no longer. To abhor Theft, Usury, Rapine, and Extortion, when a Coffin is preparing to receive us, and that Death looks us in the Face. Such persons cannot be said to leave Sin, but rather Sin leaves them as the Ravens leave a Tree that falls down by age, or that is struck with the Thunder.

By our unreasonable delays, Evil and Sin grow older, and the cure becomes every day more uneasy; for the more thou shalt be hardened in thy corruption, and confirmed in thy sins, the harder it will be for thee to break and melt thy corrupted Heart. The more Lust shall have sunk its Roots in thy Soul, the more labour thou wilt find in plucking them out. In short, he that gives too much liberty to his unlawful affections, makes his Vices, by custom, become natural, and cannot be converted without a great miracle.

Man's most important and difficult affair in the world, is his Conversion to God, Therefore it is a notable folly to put it off to such a time, as we shall be in the feeblest and weakest condition; to a time, when we shall have most business to do and most trouble. Certainly he doth not order his affairs well who puts off his praying unto God, and his thoughts of Heaven, until he comes to be stretch'd on his Death-bed; for then we know not to whom we are to turn. An account of our worldly Concerns is then required from us; we are then to make our last Will and Testament, we call for a Scrivener, and are inwardly vex'd to behold him; the visit of friends trouble us, and their absence doth as much displease us; Pain doth seize upon us; Defluxions are ready to choak us; Feavers burn us and disturb our minds; Physicians oppress us with unpleasant Remedies; the noise is a trouble to us, and silence is suspected; our Parents and Friends torment us by their officious inofficiousness, our Children, and our greatest Darlings melt our Hearts, and their Tears do force us to weep. But the worst is, the Devils are then most busy and active. These Hellish Fiends, like devouring Ravens, fly about us, endeavouring to fright us. In short, it is then that the Prince of the Powers of the Air stir up against us furious Storms and Tempests, to cause us to perish in the very Haven. In the midst of so many disturbances, and of so many powerful Waves,
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it is a difficult task to possess our Souls in peace, to think upon our Consciences, to hear God speaking to us to fear death as we ought, and to keep our selves from shaking, and from being swallowed up with its apprehensions and frights.

Old Age hath infirmities enough, we need not defile it with youthful Sins and Lusts; for many times it causeth more wounds in our Souls, than there are wrinkles upon our Skin. When the Body decays and grows weak, the Lusts of the flesh become stronger, and oft-times when it whitens the Face, it spots the Conscience. In a word, The bones of old Age are weak enough and sufficiently full of pain, that we need not over-burden them with the sins committed in the flower and strength of our Age.

Moreover, we know not when, nor how Death will assault us, nor what favour we are to expect from it; who knows but that it intends not to give us the liberty of speaking to our Friends, nor of thinking upon our Consciences? for it sends not always a warning to us, as to the good King *Hezekiah*, *Set thine House in order, for thou shalt dye*, 2 Kings 20 For as we have already taken notice, it surpriseth us in every Age, in every Time and Place, and in the midst of all manner of Employments. Old *Eli* fell down backward and broke his Neck, when he heard the unhappy news of the taking of the Ark, and the death of his Sons. *Job's* Children dreamed of nothing but of solacing and delighting themselves in their Feasts and Jollity, when the House, where they were, fell down, and buried them in the ruins. But besides these unhappy accidents, how many are there whose mouth Death closeth on a suddain, without suffering them to speak a word? how many are there in the World, who are thought to be in perfect health, and yet suddainly fall into an Apoplexy, and into other quick diseases, so that they are seen to be sooner dead than thought to be sick.

Besides, when we should have a greater strength, and more vigor, so that we might foresee the time of our departing drawing near, Repentance is not at our Command ; it is given to us from above, and a special favour of the Holy Spirit ; God works not miracles every day, he changeth not, at every moment, Rocks into Springs of Water, nor Stones into Rivers of Oil ; He grants not the favour to all Sinners hardened in their Lusts, and confirmed in their Apostacy from him, to be converted, and to be wash'd with the Tears of Repentance.

If thou seest a Thief repenting at the time of his suffering ; it is a particular example that doth not abolish the general Rule. By this Man God doth intend to comfort Sinners, who truly Repent at the end of their days, and to assure them that the Arms of his Mercy is always open to receive them into his favour. I confess, that true Repentance can never be too late, but I maintain that it can never be too soon ; it is most certain that at every moment when the Sinner repents, God will shew him Mercy, but that moment is not in our power ; for one sinner that repents at the hour of death, there are thousands that depart in impenitency. And to seek no other example, but that which Mount *Calvary* offers to us ; If thou seest on one side of Christ a Thief converted, and believe, look on the other side, and thou shalt perceive a Wretch, who having lived in unrighteousness and impiety, expires in his Sins, belching forth grievous Blasphemies and Reproaches against the King of Glory : So that if one of these remarkable passages flatters thee, and lulls thy conscience asleep, the other should move and awaken thee with an holy Fear. Moreover, the Thief was converted at the first moment, when Christ called and invited him ; Therefore, now that you hear the voice of God calling, Harden not your hearts as in the day of provocation, for fear that God should swear in his anger,

ger, that you shall never enter into his Rest. Now, yea, at this very instant, that you read this, turn unto God with all your heart, and he will have pity and compassion upon you.

When the opportunity is once lost, it is not easily, and at all times, recover'd; therefore the Painters have represented Occasion with a great Tuff of Hair on the Forehead, but all bald behind, unto every thing there is a season; God hath vouchsafed unto us a time, and reserved another for himself. Our time is when we are invited to Repentance, but God's time is when he manifests and declares his Justice and Judgments. During the space of one hundred and twenty years, *Noah*, an Herald of Righteousness preach'd Repentance to the old World, this was their time; but when God's abused patience was justly provok'd, it turn'd into fury; then he sent a fearful Deluge, that covered all the face of the Earth; This was God's time, and the day of his just Vengeance. When *Lot* spake to his Sons-in-Law to perswade them to go out of *Sodom*; this was the time of their Salvation and Deliverance; but when Fire and Brimstone overwhelmed and burned them alive, their cries and gnashing of Teeth were as useles as their laughter and mocking had been formerly unjust. When *Esau* sold the Priviledges of his Birth-right, it was the time of thinking seriously upon the true and heavenly Blessing; but when he had sold it for a sup of Pottage, all his Tears and Weepings were as Fruitless as his Gluttony had been unsatiable, and his Disposition prophane; When the Bridegroom in the *Canticles*, was at the door with the dew of his Heavenly Joys, and the myrh of his Eternal Comforts; it was the Brides time, and the occasion that was offer'd to her, to enjoy the heavenly Delights; but when she had delayed a while, unwilling to rise from her Bed, and put on her Coat, he was gone, and it was to no purpose that she sought him about the City; for in-

stead of meeting with the embraces of her Beloved, she finds her Enemies that beat and wound her. When the poor *Lazarus* did beg his Bread at the Richman's Gate, it was the time when this unmerciful Man should have repented, and shewed Mercy to the Poor Man; but when he is in Hell, burning in the Flames, it is in vain that he lifts up his eyes to Heaven, to seek for some comfort. When our Saviour exhorted the Jews to believe in him, and that he wept so bitterly upon *Jerusalem*, that had killed the Prophets; it was the time and opportunity of this unhappy Nation, it was the time of their Salvation, and of Gods Blessings; but when they had obstinately rejected this great God and Saviour, and desired that his Blood might be upon them and their Children, God hath cast them away from him, and they are become a scorn and a reproach amongst all the Nations of the Earth. Finally, as it is to no purpose, that a Malefactor resolves to amend his life when the Judge is at the door, and when the Serjeants have caught him by the throat, or when he is upon the Gallows ready to be strangled and executed; Likewise it is too late to begin to think upon God, when Death seizeth us, and that Hell opens its jaws to swallow us. Miserable wretch! Why despisest thou the Riches of God's goodness and patience, and of his long suffering, not considering that the goodness of God invites thee to repentance; but by thine hardness of thine heart that is without repentance, thou treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the Righteous judgment of God, who shall render unto every man according to his Works? *Rom. II.*

Certainly our Salvation is a matter too important to be neglected, our Life too uncertain to delay it till the next day, and our Soul too precious to run the hazard of losing it; if we had many, we might venture the loss of one, but seeing that we have but one
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only, and that if it be lost, all the Riches and Treasures of the World cannot redeem it, we should watch night and day to preserve it; We should be moved with an Holy fear of so great a loss, and decline whatsoever might cast this our precious Soul into the second Death, and Eternal ^{agult is} ~~annihilation~~.

It is our Lord and Saviour's Exhortation, *watch*, saith he, *for you know not the hour when your Lord is to come. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, for the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*, Matt. 14. Mark 16. Luk 22. This advice was so necessary, that he doth often repeat it. *Take heed to your selves, watch and pray, for you know not when that time shall be. Take heed to your selves lest your hearts be overcharg'd with gluttony and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day surprize you unawares, for as a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the Face of the whole Earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man*, Mat. 13. Luke 21.

To awaken us the more from our Spiritual drowsiness, and prophane sleep, our Saviour brings the example of the wicked Servant, who said in his heart, *My Lord delayeth his coming*, Matt. 24. And therefore he began to beat his fellow servants, to eat, drink, and be drunk; our Saviour adds, that the Lord of that servant shall come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not expected, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth, Mat. 24. The Parable of the foolish Virgins hath the same intent, they being fallen asleep without any Oil in their Lamps, were so surpriz'd at the Bridegrooms coming, that they could not be admitted into the Marriage Chamber; it was in vain that they did beat at the gate, with a *Lord, Lord open unto us*, Matt. 25. The door could not be open'd to them, but it was an-

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sword from within, *Verily I say unto you I know you not.*

I know that the cheif and principal purpose of this and other Parables, is to teach us how we should be prepar'd to expect the Glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but they may very well be applied unto Death; for it hath pleased God to keep secret and hidden the day, in the which he will call us to himself, and that of our Saviours coming to judgment, that we may be equally prepar'd, and dispos'd for the one as well as for the other. As we shall be found at the time of our death, so shall we be judged at the great day when Christ shall come down from Heaven with the Angels of his Power, and from that judgement there shall be no Appeal. Let us therefore put off the Sin that doth so easily beset us, and break all the Chains of our filthy Lusts. Let us disarm death, and take from it its venomous Darts, and its piercing stings. Let us pluck off the Claws, and the Teeth of this furious Beast, and extinguish all its fires, and it shall never be able to terrify us. Let us live the life of Saints, and God will give us grace to dye the death of the Righteous, and to end like unto them. Let us live as we would that we had lived at that instant when Death is upon our Lips. Let us live, as if at every moment we were to dye, and at every hour God will call unto us from his Heaven, Come and appear to Judgement.

And when Satan, the World, and our own Flesh sollicite and draw us to evil, Let us say within our selves, Is it thus that thou wilt reward the Lord thy God, and acknowledge all the Blessings and Favours that thou hast received from his bountiful hand? O Fool, dost thou conceive that thou canst go to Heaven by marching in the Road to Hell. If thou dost wilfully cast thy self away into the depths of sin, what assurance hast thou of rising again by Repentance? If thou forsakeest God, art not thou afraid God will forsake

Take thee? Is it thus that thou preparest thy self to dye? Are these Lusts the Arms with which thou must encounter Death? Art thou ready to draw near to the Sacred Majesty of thy God, and to appear before his great Tribunal. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the Armor of Light, *Rom. 16.* Let us live as Children of God, and Heirs of his Kingdom, *Phil. 3.* Let us be blameless, and shine as Lights in the World. Let our Conversation be as Citizens of Heaven, from whence we expected the Lord Jesus, *Eph. 2.* Let us go to the Holy and Heavenly *Jerusalem*, by the way of good Works, which God hath prepared, that we might walk in them, *Zach. 13.* In all our Actions, Words and Thoughts, let there be engraven *Holiness to the Lord.* Let us declare by our Deeds, that we really believe, without doubting, whatsoever the Holy Scripture declares of the Eternal pains of Hell, and of the unspeakable joys of Heaven, *Gal. 6.* Whilst we have time, let us do good to all, but chiefly to the Household of Faith, *Eph. 5.* Let us redeem the time for the days are evil. Do not as *Adam* did, who to eat of the forbidden Fruit, so pleasing to his taste, lost the Paradise which God had given him. Let us not loose the Eternal Delights that God hath prepared for us from the beginning of the World, for a moment of carnal pleasure.

Let us imitate the Holy and Wise Virgins, put Oil in our Lamps betimes, let us fill up our Hearts with Faith, Hope, and Charity, and put on the Robes of Righteousness and Holiness. As God's faithful Servants, Let us labour to accomplish our Task. Let us be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; that when Death shall appear, or rather when the Prince of Life shall call us to himself, we may be ready to give him an exact account of our Talents, with which he had intrusted us, and that we may
say

say unto him in sincerity and truth, *I have done the work that thou hast given me, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.* O most excellent Lord, I have nothing else to do, but to receive from thy hand, the Crown of Righteousness which thou hast promised to all that love thine appearance; I have nothing else to do, but to enter into thy Glorious Rest, where thou dost embrace, in thine infinite Mercies, all such as have overcome Sin and Death, and kept thy Works unto the end.

A Prayer and Meditation for him that prepares for Death by Repentance and an Holy Life.

O God, the Holy of Holies, who art Holiness it self; Sin hath introduc'd Death into the World, and rendered this our Enemy so terrible. Strengthen me with thy Divine Vertue, that I may be able to take from it betimes its mortal Weapons, and its fiery Darts, and that strength and poison which is so natural to it. Seeing that since the Creation of the World, thou hast prepared thine Heavenly Kingdom for me, give me Grace to employ the remainder of my life, to purge my Conscience from dead Works, and to sanctify my Body and Soul, that I may be in an Estate convenient for such an Holy Abode, into which no impure nor defiled thing shall enter, that I may be in a disposition fit to behold thy Glorious Face, that cannot be seen without Holiness. O Heavenly Father, enlighten mine understanding with the light of thine Holy Spirit, that proceeds from thee, that I may discover the ugliness of sin, and its dangerous consequences, that I may abhor and abominate it with all mine heart, that I may look upon it as an infernal Monster, and as Satans Image, as a grievous filth which hath disfigured the Master-piece of thine hands, and blotted out

of our Souls the chief features of thy Divine Image. Give me grace to esteem it as that cursed Fire that hath kindled thy wrath, set the whole world in a flame, as that unsufferable burden, under which Nature it self sighs and groans, and under which, Heaven it self complains, as the murderer of our first Parents, and of all Mankind in general; as the Executioner that crucified the Lord of Glory, and spilt his precious Blood. In short, give me grace to treat it as our most unreconcilable enemy that provoketh thy vengeance, and that labours to cast us headlong into the Abiss of Eternal Torments. O Father of Mercies, give me grace to perceive all the Beauties of Holiness, and the Glory that shall reward it; that I may be enflamed with its love, and embrace it with all the affections of my Soul, that I may look upon it as the off-spring of Heaven, as an image of thy beautiful face, and as a beam of thy Glory; as the rich Jewel which the Devil had taken from us, as the highest perfection represented by thy Son Jesus Christ; and as the chief part of that felicity unto which we pretend, and into which thou wilt bring us in thine heavenly Paradise. O God of my Salvation, how bitter are the fruits of Sin? thou seest my displeasure, for having yielded so long to that loathsome Tyrant, and assisted my carnal Lusts that war against the Soul. Thou seest the inward grief of my mind, for having neglected to employ that life which I have received from thy Mercy and Goodness, that I might live to fear, serve, and obey thy Sacred and Divine Commands; what shall I say, O Sovereign Lord of the World? I have sinned against thee, against thee have I sinned, and done that which is abominable in thy sight, but I repent in Dust and Ashes, my sins appear before me day and night, I consider them with horror. Alas! O Lord, before whom all things are naked and open, thou knowest that my greatest grief proceeds from my not grieving enough, and that my most sensible affliction is of not being afflicted sufficiently, because I cannot feel a Repentance answerable to the greatness and number of mine offences. O God that searcheth the Heart and know-
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*est all things, thou understandest the greatness of my crimes, and what should be my sorrow for their Commision; thou desirest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live; Turn me, O Lord, and then I shall be turned. Almighty God, who fetchest Water out of the hardest Rocks, draw out of my stony Heart the tears of sincere Repentance, which might be acceptable unto thee; Break and mollify this hard heart that it may receive the Waters of Eternal life, but rather pluck out this wicked heart, and give me a new heart, fashioned with thine own hands, an heart where thy Glorious Image, with all its most beautiful features, may appear with the most sacred beams that proceed from thy Divine Face; an heart that may be enflam'd with an Holy Zeal for thy Glory, and burn with a love for thee. O God of all goodness, who hast not spared the blood of thine only Son, to blot out the sentence of my doom, grant me thine Holy Spirit, that may sanctify me, and make me a new creature, that I may bear the marks and the Livery of thy chosen, and that I may shine in the World as a Lamp that burns with an Heavenly Fire. Crucify this miserable flesh with all its Lusts, that I may live, not I, but that Christ may live in me, that from henceforth I may live in the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me, and given himself for me, that he might redeem and cleanse me from all iniquity; Animate my Soul, enlighten mine understanding, direct and govern the actions of my life; take possession of me, and rule me in such a manner, that all mine affections, words and thoughts, may be sanctified by thy Grace, and tend to the promotion of thy Glory. That I may not only abhor all such things as are displeasing to thee, but that I may also shun those, which I know not whether they will be acceptable to thee; that I may not only abominate the filthy vices, but also hate the Garments infected with sin, and that I may abstain from all appearance of evil. If the Devil, the World, and mine own flesh tempt and stir me up to any sin, let the dread of thy Divine Majesty seize upon my Soul: let Death enter into my mind, and fill me with
such*

such an holy fear, as may stop and hinder me. Give me grace to consider, that I shall be the most miserable of all Creatures, if I did dye in offending and sinning against thee; if I were buried with my crimes. Let me always think upon St. John's saying, Blessed and Holy is he, who hath part in the first Resurrection, the second death shall have no dominion over him. Seeing that thy saving grace unto all men, hath appeared so openly unto me; Grant that renouncing all impiety, and worldly Lusts, I may live soberly, justly, and religiously in this present life, that I may apply my thoughts to all those thing hat are True, Honourable, Just, Pure, Lovely, of good Renown, and generally to all things that are vertuous and worthy of praise. More especially, grant, O good God, that I may be possessed with a violent Charity, which may carry me to actions of Love and Mercy, for thou delightest in such Sacrifices. Charity covers a multitude of sins. O merciful Lord, the task which thou hast given me, is long and tedious, my life is but short, and I know not how soon thou wilt come to knock at the door of mine house. O God, whose Mercies are for ever, perform in me, that which thou dost command, and then command what thou wilt produce in me with power, both the Will and the Deed, according to thy good pleasure. Give me grace to employ my self in thy work with Diligence, Faithfulness, and Zeal, that I may not be troubled at thy Glorious coming. Give me the Lamp of thy Sanctuary, lighted at the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Fill my Soul with the precious and Divine Oil that runs from thy Spirit; and cloath me with the Robes of Holiness and Light, that I may be ready to follow the Bridegroom into the Banqueting Chamber, and sit at thy Table with the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and the Holy Virgin, and all those who have wash'd, and whitned their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb. Let me live the life of the Saints, that I may dye the death of the Righteous, that I may be admitted into thy Glorious Rest with thy Chosen; and that when I am
breathing

breathing forth thy last gasp, thy Son Jesus Christ may call to me from Heaven, Come good and faithful Servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord, Amen.

CHAP. XII.

*The sixth Remedy against the fears of Death,
is to repose our selves upon God's
good Providence.*

Some persons there are so brutish and stupified, that they never think upon the great end and design of their Creation; they are not able to give a just account wherefore God hath put them into the World, they are Carnal and earthly minds, who imagine that they were created for themselves, as brute Beasts, only to eat and drink. Such are of the number of those that are mentioned by *St. Paul*, their God is their Belly, and their end is Eternal Misery. But there are also some wise and vertuous minds, that are continually meditating upon the favours that they received from Heaven, which they employ to their right and proper end. Such Celestial understandings being enlightened from above, consider very well that they are not born for themselves, but for their Countrey, for their Parents, for their Friends, and chiefly for to serve God and his Church on Earth; therefore they desire to live only to glorify their Creator, and advance his Kingdom.

When this good desire is well governed, it is as acceptable to God, as a sweet smelling Sacrifice. This was *David's* earnest desire in the 119 Psalm, *Let my Soul live, that it may praise thee.* This Holy Zeal forced so many bitter Tears from King *Hezekiah* in his sickness, and caused him to intreat most earnestly to live

live yet longer in the World. This wise and Religious Prince did well foresee the fearful Evils, the grievous Confusion, and the abominable Idolatry that was likely to succeed after his Death, in the Kingdom of *Judea*. He was therefore very desirous to glorify God on Earth, and to accomplish the Reformation which he had begun; he desired to have Children whom he might teach to fear God with all their heart, and to serve him according to his Holy and Divine will, that he might cause Piety to continue in his House and Royal Family; he discovers this Holy desire in his Divine Hymn, which he sung unto God, after his miraculous recovery. *Behold, for Peace I had great bitterness, but thou hast in love to my Soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back, for the Grave cannot praise thee, Ps. 138. Death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down into the pit, cannot hope for thy Truth, the living he shall praise thee, as I do this day, the Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth: The Lord was ready to save me, therefore we will sing my Songs to the stringed Instruments, all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.* We find the same earnest desire in St. Paul, for when he looks upon himself, and upon the miseries that attend upon him on Earth, and lifts up his Eyes to see the Heavenly Bliss that waits for him above, he desires to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle, and to be with Christ, and acknowledgeth that it would be his great advantage; but when he looks upon the Church of Christ, his desire of the Salvation, and instruction of his Brethren, causeth him to prefer their Comfort to his own Happiness and Joy. *It is, saith he, more expedient for you that I remain in the Flesh, and I know for certain, that I shall abide and remain with you for your advantage, and the joy of your faith.*

This desire of Life, with an intent of Glorifying God, is Good and Holy; but it is no easy task to keep
it

it within its just and lawful bounds, for very often it becomes vicious, when it is stirr'd up by a fond love of our own persons, which makes us so loth to dye.

For example, when a great Prince, animated with an Heroical Vertue, is engaged in a War for the preservation of his Subjects, and for the delivery of many afflicted People, from Oppression and Tyranny, if God blesteth his Armies, and causeth his Glorious designs to succeed, he will not be well pleased, if Death at that instant offers to cross him, to break in pieces his victorious Arm, to put an end to his Conquests, and to cast his Crown to the ground; he may justly complain in this manner, Must I now leave off such a noble and a brave Design? must I here stop in the midst of such a glorious Race? and must Death bury with my Body, the expectations of so many good Men? I am afraid that all my labours will vanish away with my breath; I have just cause to fear, that my fall will draw after me the destruction of many poor People that depend upon me. I fear that oppression and Tyranny will resume fresh Spirits, and a greater Boldness, and prove, for the future, more grievous and unsufferable. O cruel and inhumane Death! by taking away my Life, thou bringest my Friends to Execution, and the Arrows that thou stickest in my Heart, do pierce the Souls of many innocent People.

Likewise, he that is promoted to be the King's Viceroy in a Province, or to be a Governor of a rich Country, and an important Place, may be grieved because Death snatcheth him away in the middle of all his business, especially if it be in troublesome times, and if he sees none of a sufficient ability to succeed him; Must I, will such an one say? Must I quit so soon this Glorious employment? Must I so quickly leave my Prince's service, and forsake so many poor People, as a Flock without a Shepherd? Death, how hateful and
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odious art thou? Thou delightest to bring all things into confusion and trouble.

Thus a brave General of a victorious Army, who being full of Courage, manageth a successful War, for the Honour of his Prince, and the advantage of his Country, cannot but complain against Death, when it comes to subdue him before he hath totally subdued and overcome his Enemies, especially, if the times be so unhappy, that none is able to undertake that employment after him; he will be ready to break forth into complaints: Must I leave off so many Glorious designs? Must I forsake my most faithful Soldiers, and abandon them to the mercy of their Enemies' or to the capricious humour of an unexperienced Successor? O Death, full of envy! wilt thou pluck out of my hands so soon, this conquering Sword, and cut of, with one blow of thy Sithe, so many great expectations? In the same manner, he that sits in the most Honourable seats of Judicature, as a Judge, a President, or a Counsellor, or any other chief Magistrate, will doubtless mourn if Death seizeth upon him in the flower of his age; especially, if he fears, that after him corrupt Men will succeed, who may be likened to whitened Walls. Must I, will he say, leave so soon this noble Office, in which I took so much delight? O inconsiderate Death why dost thou not suffer me to wear my Purple, until such time as I shall be weary to bear it? Why dost thou not permit me to sit here upon this magnificent Seat, until I tumble off with old Age?

Likewise a faithful Minister of the Gospel, when he perceives the work of the Lord to prosper in his hands; Satan falls from Heaven by his means, as a Lightning, and *Dagon* to be brought upon his Face to the ground, may justly wonder at Death's approaches, and speak in this manner; Must I so soon quit the duties of this Holy Function, in which I took my great-

est delight? Must I break off from this Sacred Work, by which I did advance so happily, the Glory of God? I am afraid, that when I am gone, ravening Wolves will enter into the Lords Flock, and a terrible night of ignorance will involve our posterity.

Thus a Father of a Family, who passionately loves Wife and Children, shall never see death, but shall feel all his Bowels move, and his Heart tormented with grief, he will sigh out such expressions as these, Must I forsake a poor forlorn Wife, swimming in Tears? Must I leave my tender-hearted Parents, who found my life a comfort, and will find my Death an affliction? Must I abandon my dear Children whom I love as my Soul, without guide, and in danger of losing the small temporal means that I have provided for them; in danger also of being overcome by the vicious customs of the age, and inticed to Idolatry and Superstition?

That we may be able to govern this violent passion that prevails so much upon our minds, we must labour betimes to bring our selves to this; *That we may rest upon the good providence of our Heavenly Father.* Christian Souls, meditate upon this excellent saying in the 37 Psalm, *Leave thy ways to the Lord, and trust in him, and he will direct thee.* And in the 59. Psal. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee.* Forget not also that blessed exhortation of St. Peter, *Cast all your cares upon God for he careth for you.* Imprint also in your minds, St. Paul's assertion, *All things work together for good to them that love God.* Remember the noble resolution of this great Apostle, *According to my earnest expectation, and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by life or by death.*

Thou desirest to be instrumental in the service of God, and of the Publick; it is an excellent desire indeed

deed, and praise worthy, but it belongs to God to appoint the service that he intends to receive from thee; it belongs to him to prescribe unto thee thy task, and to order thy bounds: he knows when he is to release thee from thy labour, and how long thou must fight. Is thine eye evil because thy God is so good and gracious as to shorten thy work and troubles? All such as follow chearfully the Banners of the God of Hosts, and never retreat without the Command of the great General of Heaven and Earth, shall enjoy a blessed victory, and obtain the honour of the Triumph; as well the Novice and the fresh Soldier, as the old and long experienced. All such as labour faithfully in the Lord's Vineyard, shall receive, from him, an eternal Reward, as well as he that continues but an hour, as the other that bear the heat and burden of the day. When thou shouldest have gone but a few steps in the paths of Righteousness, thy God is so noble and liberal, that he will bestow upon thee an uncorruptible Crown of Glory, as well as if thou hadst continued there many years.

Great Princes, that yield unto the King of Kings, a Religious Respect, and that seek your greatest Glory in the Cross of Christ, submit your selves altogether to the pleasure of your universal Monarch; for seeing the Lives of all Men are governed by his wise Providence, he hath a particular regard, and an high esteem of the Lives of Kings and Princes, the Sons of his right hand. Therefore whilst it is expedient for his Glory and their Salvation, that they should live upon Earth, he placeth round about their Sacred Persons his Holy Angels, and encompasseth them with a wall of Fire. Remember that as soon as the King of Israel was seated upon the Throne, God commanded him to take in hand the Book of his Law, and to read in it all the days of his life. Ask from him that Wisdom and Prudence that is requisite to govern such multitudes of People, and beseech him to grant unto

you the strength and vertue that is necessary to bear so great a burden. Let the Sword that he hath intrusted in your hands, be to do justice upon Offenders, and to protect the Guiltless. As you are living Images of Gods Sovereign Authority over his Creatures; Remember that you should also represent his Goodness and Mercy: follow the example of him who resists the Proud, but gives grace to the Humble. Live in such a manner, that your Subjects may cherish and honour you, as their common Father, may obey and serve you as their Lord, and may respect and fear you as their King. Suffer not your Heart to be puffed up with pride, when you behold the large Dominions that God hath put under your Command, and the People that own you for their Sovereign; But lift up your eyes to the spacious Heavens, take a view of their vast Extent, and see how the whole Earth is inconsiderable in comparison of them, and think upon God, before whom all Nations are but as the smallest dust of a Ballance, and as a few drops of Water. Consider well, that your Subjects are Creatures that God hath made after his own likeness, and redeemed by the death of his Son, and that they are to Reign with you for ever in Heaven. Remember that the more God hath committed to your Trust, the greater must be your reckoning, and that you must one day appear in person before his dreadful Throne, without Scepter or Crown, as so many wretched Sinners to emprove his Mercy. Search into your selves, and examine what you are; your Bodies are subject to wounds, infirmities, and diseases, as that of the meanest of your servants; Your Souls also are moved with the same Passions and Lusts as theirs. In short, you are entered into the World in the same manner, as the most miserable Slave, and you shall go out of it again as he doth, so that if a crowd of flatterers sooth you up as they did *Herod*, *A voice of God and not of Man*, Acts 12. Mind well what God speaks to you from

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Heaven, I have said that ye are Gods, and the Children of the most high, nevertheless you shall dye as Men, and you that are the chiefest, shall fall as the rest, Psal. 72. During the time of your abode in the World, employ your Blood, Sweat, and all the strength and Power that God hath put into your hands, for the good and advantage of your States, and for the defence and preservation of the people, that shelter themselves under your wings. And if, in the midst of your greatest and most flourishing Prosperities, Death comes to give you a summons to depart; let fall the Scepter willingly, to joyn your hands together, and to fall down and adore the King of the whole Earth. Grieve not for the loss of worldly Glory that passeth away as a Lightning, or as a shadow, for God promiseth another, that shall be more lasting than the light of the Sun. If you can but overcome Death and your selves, God will cause you to sit down upon another Throne, and will bestow upon you a Kingdom that shall never be moved, Revel. 3. Heb. 12.

Wise and Religious Princes, be not solicitous for the things that shall happen after your decease. He by whom Kings Reign, and Princes do Justice, is able enough to enrich your Successor with the Graces and Qualities that become a powerful Prince. It may be that he will bestow upon him more Glory and Happiness than upon you. When King *David* had ended his mortal Race, God took him into his Rest: it seems at first, that the loss of so good a Prince could not be repaired; but God caused *Solomon* to sit upon his Fathers Throne, and made him the wisest and the most happy Monarch of the World. *David* did but remove God's Ark, but *Solomon* built, for him, a stately and magnificent Temple; *David* was a Type of the Encounters and Victories of the Son of God, but *Solomon* represented his Glorious Triumphs, and that

Eternal Peace, with which he shall bless his Chosen in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What if you leave your Children under age, be not discouraged, for God will preserve them, as the Signet upon his Right-Hand, or as the Apple of his Eye. Think upon *Josias*, who was but eight years old when he succeeded in the Kingdom of *Judea*; nevertheless there was never a Prince more Holy and more Religious, none ever did more good to the Church of God; and that you may be able to strengthen your Faith, and confirm your glorious expectations, meditate upon the Life of *Joas*, who was but a year old when his Father was killed, and an infernal Fury sought to destroy him, but in the middle of so many Tragedies God preserved him alive, by a Miracle, and placed him, in a Glorious manner, upon the Throne of his Fathers. Seeing therefore that it is the pleasure of him who gives and takes away the earthly Crowns, leave cheerfully this corruptible one, to receive another that is immortal and uncorruptible. You also, noble Governors of Countreys and Castles that represent the Persons of your Kings and Princes; remember that this Dignity comes not only from the appointment of your Masters, but from God himself, who holds in his hands the Hearts of all the Kings and Princes of the world. Remember what our Saviour told the Governor of *Judea*, *Thou shouldest have no power upon me, if it were not given to thee from above*, John. 19, Let all the world see, by you, that there is nothing more consonant and suitable than Piety towards God, with faithfulness to your Prince. Take heed that you abuse not your Power and Authority in satisfying your passions, and pleasing your covetousness or vanity. Protect not the guilty, and oppress not the innocent. Seeing that you are appointed to punish evil doers, and to encourage such as do well, behave your selves as if ye were always in the sight of your Prince, or rather behave your selves, as
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in the presence, and in the sight of God, before whom all things are naked and open, as if you were to give up unto him, an account of your Stewardship. Whilst you are happily employed in the service of your Prince, and of your Countrey; if Death comes to interrupt your prosperity, yield your selves, without resistance, to the wise Governance and Orders of him, who is both your Sovereign, and unto whom you must be subject on Earth.

Trouble not your selves with the thoughts of the things that shall happen after your death, and think not but that there are yet some worthy and able to succeed you in your employments. When God is pleas'd to be favourable to Kings, and to cause their Seats to flourish, he raiseth up faithful Ministers, and wise Governors, as when he gave to *Pharaoh* a *Jeseph*; to *Hezekiah*, an *Eliakim*; to *Nebuchadnezzar* a *Daniel*. When he pleaseth to search into his unfathomed Treasuries, he can quickly provide Men after his own Heart, adorned with all the abilities required for a worthy discharge of a glorious employment. In the mean while, if thou hast overcome Satan, Sin, the World, and Death, thou shalt go and take possession of a greater and more lasting Glory. He that bears upon his Garments and Thighs, this Inscription! *The King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords*, hath given out this unchangeable promise; he that shall overcome, and hath kept my Works until the end, I will give unto him power over the Nations, and he shall govern them with a Rod of Iron.

Right Honourable Counsellors, that assist your Prince with your wise Counsels; and you inferior Magistrates and Judges, never forget what *Jehosaphat* said to the Judges of his Kingdom, 2 Chron. 9. *Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgement. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it, for there is no*

iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of Gifts. Psal. 85. Whensoever you go to take your place amongst the Judges of the Kingdom; remember that God sits there upon his Throne, and every time that you give a Charge, or pronounce a Sentence, consider that you are to follow Gods direction, and that this Great Creator takes notice of your Actions, Words, and of the motions of your Heart, and that he understands your most secret thoughts, judge with the same equity and justice, with which you desire to be judged: If you be tempted to do Wrong, to conceal the Truth, or to commit an injustice, either by a base compliance, or by an expectation of Worldly advantage, or for filthy Lucre; remember that it is the Devil that tempts you, pray therefore to God to deliver you from his power; and that you may be better able to command your selves with an Holy dread, think upon death that warms you in person, nay, drags you to appear before the Universal Judge of Mankind, to give up an account of all your Actions, and of the Sentences that you have given; but if Death surpriseth you when you are discharging your Offices with all the diligence and integrity imaginable; stay not till it forces you, but cast off willingly the Robes of Judicature, to take the Habit of a Suppliant, and pray to God, that he may not enter into judgement with you because no living creature shall be justified in his presence, *Psal. 13.*

Let not the consideration of the passages that shall happen after your decease, obstruct your Christian resolution. There are men enough in the World of a sufficient ability, to supply your places; And God is able to raise up some that we dream not of, as when he created in one day threescore and ten Judges in *Israel*, whom he endowed with sufficient abilities, and with the graces of his Holy Spirit; He may produce some that will be as Righteous and Just as your selves,
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and it may be more enlightened with discretion, and prudence, than you. Come off therefore willingly from these seats of Judicature, so beset with Thorns, upon which you should never rest without horror and dread, if you sincerely fear God, and go with Confidence to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need, *Heb. 4.*

And as true Piety is as soon to be found in the Tents of *David*, and in the Temple of *Solomon*; as the Sword of *Gideon* agrees well with that of the God of Hosts, I may make my addresses to you, worthy Generals, brave Captains, and generous Nobility, unto whom Kings, Princes, and Commonwealths commit the leading of their Armies; I speak not unto you prophane Atheists, that laugh at the most Holy things, and that are of opinion, that all fear of God must be banished out of your Troops and Companies, and that the most wretched Varlets are the best Soldiers; but I speak to you Christian and Religious Commanders, who forget not, by your promotion amongst Men, that you are nevertheless the Soldiers of Jesus Christ; and although you wear at your side a material Sword, forget not to employ also the sword of the Spirit, the word of God that dwells in your hearts: Neither do I intend to speak to you who manage War, with an intent only to satisfy your Revenge, your Ambition, or your Covetousness; but I speak to you brave and worthy Captains, who have purified your weapons in an Heavenly Fire, who undertake War, only to procure a more lasting Peace to the publick, and Who fight only to serve your Prince and Countrey; you that are the great bulwarks of States and Empires, by whose labours and watchings Men sleep in security; Let the whole world see by experience in your persons, that there is nothing that agrees better with true generosity than Piety and the fear of God; behave yourselves always, as in the sight of your Maker, who is

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at your Elbows, and accompanies you in all your actions. Remember that he commanded to remove all filth from the Camp of *Israel*, because of his Holy and Divine presence. If you will obtain his Blessing upon your persons and designs, cast out of your Armies the filth of Vice, and Punish, without Mercy, the Rapes, Burnings, all Impiety and Blasphemies; make your Soldiers put in practice *St. John* the Baptist's most excellent advice to the Soldiers of his time, who enquired what they were to do to be saved; *Do violence*, said he, *to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.* Live as Lambs, and fight as Lions, Spare as much as you can the blood of your Soldiers, and shed not that of your Enemies, but against your Wills, because they are Gods Creatures, and Men that bear his Image. Never trust to your own valour and experience, but remember that it is God who gives Courage, and strengthens the hands in the day of Battel, who causeth Fear and Terror to fly whither he listeth. Look always upon *David's* example, There was never a Captain more couragious, nor more willing to venture his life; and yet there was never a person more zealous in Prayer to God, nor more submissive to his Will, nor more careful to return unto him, the praise of all his advantages: and if Death comes to put a stop to your victories, or to call you away in a trice, in which your Prudence and Courage is requisite, wonder not at it, consider that God offers you by this means an occasion of a more Glorious Victory, and of a more Magnificent Triumph; for the victory over thousands of Mortal Men, and of the whole World, is nothing in comparison of a victory over Death and Hell. Inquire not who shall succeed you in the Conduct of your Army, out of a distrust of God's good providence; for he who is able to raise up Children unto *Abraham*, out of Stones, can raise up also, from thence, Captains and Soldiers when he pleaseth, to give a check to the
Enemies

Enemies pride, and to deliver his People from their hands; he can make *Gideons*, *Jephtha's*, *Sampsons*, and such like extraordinary Commanders; Who knows but that he will cause a General to succeed you, that shall have more Courage and Generosity, and that shall be blessed with a greater Happiness, and more Glorious Successes? When *Moses* departed to his Rest, *Joshua* Commanded in his stead, and for that purpose God enabled him with a noble Spirit of Wisdom and Courage; for one Enemy that *Moses* overcame, *Joshua* destroyed thousands; whereas *Moses* did but coast along the Land of *Canaan*, and turn up and down in the Wilderness, *Joshua* brought the People of *Israel* into that pleasant Countrey, and into a peaceable possession of it. Seeing therefore that it is God's pleasure, leave to others the care of worldly Wars, and ye go to gather the pleasant and delicious Fruits of an Eternal Peace, which hath been purchased unto you by the Blood of Christ.

Likewise ye faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ; remember to shew the example of a resignation to God's good pleasure, according to your Doctrine; Let not Death cause you to draw back: thou hast, my Brother, a Will to Glorify God on Earth well, but thou shalt Glorify him better in Heaven, with more zeal and less hindrance; whilst thou art surrounded and fetter'd with these Fetters of Mortality, thy Ministry must needs be accompanied with many imperfections. Thou imaginest, that if it pleased God to prolong thy days, thou mayest be Instrumental in the reformation of the World; but thou art mistaken, *My Brother*, for this World is accusom'd to Evil, and this Age is hardened in iniquity. Preach as much as thou wilt to the Inhabitants of this inferior World, it shall be as in the times of *Noah*, the Herald of Righteousness, when the patience of God waited for the conversion of Sinners, for the whole Earth hath corrupted its ways; so that
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all the thoughts and imaginations of the Heart of Man are evil continually, from his Cradle they are corrupt and filthy; And if God doth not interpose his Almighty Hand, and declare in us the Virtue of his Holy Spirit, our thoughts will grow worse and worse, until we tumble into our Graves. If thou afflict never so much thy just and innocent Soul, and spend thy self and exhorting the greatest Sinners, to fly from the wrath to come, and the judgements of God that hang over their guilty Heads; it may be thou shalt be mocked by thy nearest Relations, as *Lot* was by his Sons-in-law. When thou wouldest thunder out the threatnings of God's Law against the abominations of *Israel*, as the Prophet *Isaiab* did once, thou shouldest be forced at last to confess, *I have labour'd in vain, I have employed my strength for nought*, *Isai.* 49. *Jer.* 6. When thine Eyes should be converted into a fresh Spring of Tears, and when thou shouldest spend the days and the nights in calling upon the Superstitious, the Schismatiks, and Idolaters, to forsake their false worship, and their unchristian proceedings; thou shalt not be able to soften the hardness of their Hearts, nor overcome their obstinacy, but they will be ready to speak to thee in the Jews language to *Jeremiab*. *As for the word that thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouths, to burn incense unto the Queen of Heaven and to pour out Drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, for then had we plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no evil, Jer.* 44. When thou shouldest speak with a Divine Tongue, and with an Heavenly Wisdom, thou mayest have good cause to cry out, *who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* *Isai.* 5. *John* 12. In short, as the Rivers of fresh water that run continually into the Sea

Sea, derive not from thence their natural bitterness; thus thy good and Holy Life, thy Learned and excellent Sermons will not be able to remove the corruptions of this present evil Age, nor stop the Torrent, and hinder the overflowings of Vice, for thy labour and industry, if compared with the corruption of the World, are as unconsiderable as a few drops of water in comparison of the Ocean. This cursed Earth may be watered with thy Sweat and Tears; it will nevertheless bring forth nothing but Bryars and Thistles; the Weeds which thou thinkest to pluck up, will tear thy Skin, and draw blood out of thy Hands, In short, he that plants is nothing, nor he that watereth, but it is God who giveth the increase, 1 Cor. 3.

It is justly to be feared, that in staying any longer time in this corrupt and unwholsome Air; thou mayest receive some evil impressions from the general contagion. It is to be feared, that thou mayest sully thy pure Hands, by handling so many Wounds and Sores, and that the Thorns of this cursed Earth, may pluck off the Wooll of thine harmless and innocent life.

But when thou shouldest have a thousand times more Gifts and Graces, and that thy labours should bring far greater advantages and profit to Christ's Church; it belongs not to thee to give Laws unto thy God, but to follow the motion of his Will. Leave to him the cheif care of his own Household, and rest upon his Eternal Providence; He hath more right in the Church than thou canst pretend to, for he hath created it by his Power, and redeem'd it by his precious Blood. He that cares not for his own, especially for those of his Family, hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel; and can God, who is Faithfulness it self, and the very Being of Truth; God, who cannot deny himself, and whose Gifts and Calling are without Repentance, Rom. 12. Can such a God cast off all

all care of his Church, of that Church which he embraceth with an Eternal Love, and cherisheth as the apple of his Eye? *Jer.* 31. This Father of Mercies, who hath not spared his own Son, but hath delivered him to dye for his Church, how should not he with him freely give her all things? *Rom.* 8. He understands better than thou, and all the men of the World, what is proper and advantageous for this Holy Congregation, and for every member that composes it. He knows how to provide for all its wants, for his Wisdom is infinite, and his Providence is most wonderful.

When this great God hath a design to plague his Enemies, and to declare his Justice, he hath always fit Agents ready, and his Quiver full of Arrows; As soon as he commands the Holy Angels that wait before him, to cast their Sicles into the Earth, and to reap or pour down the viols of his wrath; these Holy Spirits fly with an unspeakable swiftness to perform his Sacred Pleasure, *Revel.* 14, & 16. Likewise when he intends to do good to his Chosen, he finds in every place the Heralds of his Mercy, and his Divine hand is always full of Blessings. As the Main Ocean of his wonderful Riches can never become dry; Likewise the Channels by which he conveys them to us, shall never fail.

The cause of thy complaints should serve to appease thy Grief, nourish thy Faith, and increase thy Hopes, for if thou art graced with extraordinary Gifts, this proceeds neither from thy Nature, nor thine Industry, but God's Favour and Bounty. Now thou mayest be assured that his hand is not shortened, his great Power is not lessened, the well-spring of all his Blessings and Wonders, is not stopt nor dried up. *Is.* 49. He that sends a desired whiteness, the prognostick of an approaching harvest to the spacious Fields, *John* 4. He sends also into his Spiritual Harvest, Labourers when he sees it convenient. In this latter Age, and in this decay of the
World,

World, as well as in the first appearance of his Church, *Luk 10.* he finds Men to work in his Vineyard, or rather he forms and fashions them with the hand of his Grace, and enables them by his Holy Spirit, for he gives the Mouth and the Tongue, he makes deaf, dumb, blind, and restores the eye-sight; he calls things that are not as if they were, *Matth. 20. Exod. 4. Rom. 4.*

When he designs for himself a Tabernacle, he calls by name a *Bezaleel*, and fills him with his Spirit of Wisdom, of Understanding and knowledge, in all manner of Workmanship, *Exod. 31.* When he resolves to deliver the Children of *Israel*, from their *Babylonish* Captivity, and to build the Temple of *Jerusalem*, he hath at his Command *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Artaxerxes*, *Acts 14.* He stirs up *Zerobabels*, *Esdra*s, and *Nehemi*ahs. Likewise when he intends to repair the breaches of his House, and to increase the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, he makes Servants and fit Agents, and bestows upon them sufficient Graces for such a noble Work, *Psal. 8. Mat. 21.* As he hath never left himself without witness in doing good, thus he hath never been without witnesses to declare his Sacred Truth, *Luk 19.* By the mouth of Babes he Perfects his praise, and as our Saviour told the Jews, *If these held their peace the stones would cry out*, *Luk 19.* God will rather pluck the Pillars of the Idols Temples, to prop up his Church, rather than to suffer it to fall down; he will change the Wolves into Lambs, and the Lambs into Shepherds rather than that his Sheep should want their necessary Pasture. He chooseth the feeble things of this World, to confound the strong, despicable, and such as are not, to destroy such as are, *1 Cor. 9.*

Thus God never leaves his Church without some testimony of his favour, some powerful instrument of his Grace; but many times it happens, that when he removes one good thing from us, he bestows upon us something more rare and excellent. This consideration
glads

glads the Heart of *Joseph* upon his Death-bed, as appears by what he said to his Brethren, *I am going to dye, but God will not fail to visit you, and cause you to go up from hence into the Land, that he swore unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Gen. 50.* For instead of a *Joseph* who had occasioned their Bondage, God raised up a *Moses*, who deliver'd them with a mighty hand, and a stretched-out Arm, *2 Kings 2.* Thus God took up *Elijah* with a Chariot of Fire. but he gave unto *Elisha* a double portion of his Masters Spirit, and caused his Glorious Miracles to appear with greater admiration. Likewise our Lord and Saviour, when he had finished the great work of our Redemption, he ascended up into Heaven. A Cloud conveying him up to the Throne of his Glory; but according to his promise, he hath not left us destitute, but hath sent us the Comforter to dwell with us for ever, namely, the Spirit of Truth whom the World seeth not, nor cannot know, *John 14.* Christ Corporal presence was enjoyed but by a small number of People, but this Divine Spirit is like a large River that swells and runs over every where, *John 7.* This Holy Spirit is not only with us, but also within us, He is poured out into our Hearts, he Seals us for the day of Redemption, He is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the full consummation of the Glory reserved for us in Heaven; Therefore when this merciful Saviour saw his Apostles afflicted in an extraordinary manner for his Leaving of the World, he speaks to them in this Language, Because I have said these things unto you, Sorrow hath filled your Hearts; Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; But if I depart I will send him unto you, *John 16.* When *St. Paul* took his last farwel of the Elders and People of the Church of *Ephesus*, they wept bitterly, being grieved to the Heart because he had said, *That none of them should see his*

face any more. But to comfort them, he assures them that in Heaven they had a Father and a Protector, and such a Shepherd as would never forsake them; I commend you, said he, *To God, and to the word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.* Act. 20. Remember therefore O Man of God, seriously to consider all these things; If the Lord who hath called thee to the Sacred Function of the Ministry, continues thee in the world; labour with courage and diligence in thine Holy employment; Be not tired in the service of this good Master and merciful Saviour; fight the good fight of the Faith, endure patiently all manner of Labours, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ; be as earnest and as careful for the Lord's Sheep, as *Jacob* was for those of *Laban*; Here what he professed of himself, *In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from mine eyes,* Gen. 20. *Jacob* endured patiently these grievous pains and labour, and the time of his service, seem'd to him to be but of a few days, because of the love that he did bear unto *Rachel*; Likewise thou wilt joyfully endure the troubles of thine Office: digest with patience all the inconveniencies, if thou dost sincerely love the Lord Jesus, and his Heavenly Spouse. If thou dost esteem the salvation of Souls, for whom Jesus Christ hath suffered death; if thou hast well understood the Excellency of thine Heavenly Reward, and the Glory prepared for thee, when thou shalt have finished the time of thy painful and difficult service, and of thy mortal Race; for they who bring many to Righteousness shall shine as the Stars, for ever and ever, Dan. 12. *Jacob* had to do with a deceitful and unfaithful man; But God is not as Man, that he should Lye, or as the Son of Man, that he should Repent! Gen. 23. Be thou faithful until Death, and he will give thee the Crown of Life, Revel. 2.

If it is the Lord's pleasure to lessen thy task, so that instead of employing thee in his Vineyard, he intends to take thee up into his Kingdom, to drink there of his new Wine ; if at the time that thou thinkest of sowing with Tears, thou art transported to the place where thou mayest reap with Songs of Triumph ; If in lieu of the opposition which thou must suffer from sinners, God will grant to thee his Eternal Consolations, and receive thee into the harmonious Societies of the Church Triumphant, adore his Goodness, and his infinite Mercy ; cast thy self into his hands, and resolve chearfully, to will, what is pleasing to him ; if during thine abode in this Valley of Tears, God hath given thee a livelyhood, and if thou hast found in him thy joy, thy satisfaction, and thy greatest comfort, Death will be thy greatest advantage ; thou shalt find in thy Saviour, thy Rest, thy Glory, and Eternal Delights, *Phil. 1* Meditate often upon the words of the Holy Apostle St. Peter, *The elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed, feed thee Flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, but being ensamples to the Flock, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away, 1 Pet. 5,*

You also, who are afraid to leave behind you a desolate, afflicted, and comfortless Widow ; Come and learn this Lesson, to relye upon the goodness and tender compassions of the Father of Mercies, who never fails to comfort the forlorne in all their afflictions, and who is always near to them that call upon him in their distresses, *2 Cor. 1. Psal. 145.* He bears so much favour to the Widows, that he calls himself *The Judge of the Widows*, *Psal. 68.* That is, the Protector of their integrity

tegrity and right, and severe revenger of the wrongs that they suffer; Therefore God tells us in express words, That he maintains the Widow, and establisheth her borders, *Prov. 15*. Seeing *Job* was so merciful as to cause the Widows Heart to sing, *Job 28*. How much more may we expect from God's goodness, he will doubtless fill her with his Heavenly joys, and the ravishing comforts of his Holy Spirit. I mean not the foolish Widows that seek for nothing but pleasure, worldly diversion, and carnal pastimes, who live in the delights of the Age, and *who are dead whilst they live*. But I mean the wise widows, who being left alone by their Husbands death, have their confidence and trust in God. continuing in Prayer day and night.

Our great God and merciful Lord, hath not only said in general, that he is the Judge, the Protector, and Comforter of the Widow; But he hath vouchsafed unto some his most signal Favours and extraordinary Blessings; in the Reign of *Ahab*, while a cruel Famine overspread the Land; God sent the Prophet *Elijah* to a poor Widow of *Sareptah*, who was preparing her self and her Son to dye, as soon as they had eaten a little remnant of Meal and Oil that was left; but the Holy Prophet comforted her in this mannner, Thus saith the Lord, the God of *Israel*, the barrel of Meal shall not wast, neither shall the cruse, of Oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth Rain upon the Earth, *1 King 5*. Many Widows have been comforted, in such a miraculous manner, for God hath so ordered it, that their provisions have not failed; although it may be, that they have not enjoyed any unusual Plenty: yet this wise Purveyor hath furnished them, the things that have been necessary for them; so that not only, both they and their Children have subsisted in the greatest calamities, but they have had the Honour of assisting God's Prophets; and as that poor Widow of the Gospel gave Alms out of her poverty; such Mites have

been more pleasing to God, than the Treasuries of the wealthy. Moreover when the Son of God, was in the World, he was pleased to express how much care and compassion he had of Widows, for when he met, at the Gate of the City of *Nain*, a poor Widow weeping bitterly for her only Son, that was carried out to be buried, he was moved with a tender feeling of her affliction, therefore he raised the young man to life again, and restored him to his Mother, It was also at the solicitation of some devout Widows, that *St Peter* raised *Dorcas* from death to life. I must needs take notice here of an admirable story, proper to comfort every faithful servant of God. The Widow of a deceased Prophet, made this bitter complaint unto *Elisha*, *Thy Servant my Husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy Servant did fear the Lord, and the Creditor is come to take unto him my two Sons to be bond-men*, 2 King 4. God, who hears the cry of the afflicted, had compassion of that poor distressed Widow, so that he gave unto her, by *Elisha's* means in a wonderful manner, sufficient for the payments of her debts, and for to nourish her Family; by this glorious example, God declares the care that he will have of his Prophets Widows, whilst they walk in his fear, and continue in his Holy Covenant.

In short, the modern and antient Histories, are full of notable examples of wise and vertuous Widows, that have discreetly governed their Families, and upon whom God's Blessings have visibly appeared.

Almighty God, who is wonderful in all his Works, doth sometimes order affairs in such a manner, that Fathers don't gather up for their Children; but he gives to some such Children in his Mercy, that make provision for their Fathers; such are an extraordinary Blessing to their Family, as *Joseph* was to *Jacob* and his Household. Such wise and vertuous Children, who are so necessary to their Parents, whom they Love and Honour, might, out of their violent affection for them

speak

Speak unto Death in the language of the young man of the Gospel; *Suffer me to go first and bury my Father.* Let me alone a while in the world, suffer me to live, O death, until I have accompanied my Parents to their Grave, until I have closed their Eye-lids and performed the last duties that Nature requires. But hear-ken officious Son! what the Lord saith to thee, *Suffer the dead to bury the dead*, but thou follow me. Leave to them, that remain after thee, the care of Worldly affairs, but do thou yield thy self at Go'ds Call. Thy Charity for others must not cause thee to be cruel to thy self, and disobedient to the Commands of thy God. Fear not to leave thy Father and Mother, when thou art going to cast thy self into the ravishing embraces of thy Spiritual Bridgroom, and of thine Heavenly Father. The great God, who hath given thee, or rather lent thee to them and who caused them to subsist before thou hadst a Being, can feed and bless them without thee; his Mercy is not tied to thy Person, nor confin'd to thine industry. When our Lord and Saviour was upon the Cross, seeing the Blessed Virgin and the Disciple whom he loved, said to his Mother, Woman, *behold thy Son*, and to St. John, *Son behold thy Mother*, John 19. and from that hour that Disciple took her unto his own home. In the like manner when God calls unto his Eternal Rest, him who was the supporter of his Family, as Joseph was, he provides for them by some other means; so that if Elkanah had good cause to say to his Wife, when she wept, because she had no Child, Am not I better to thee then ten Sons? 1 Sam. 1. we may say with more reason, that God's Grace, his Assistance, and the Comforts of his Holy Spirit, are better worth then Ten Thousand Children.

The strongest Passion, and that which I judge to be the most apt to hinder a good Man, is that which Fathers and Mothers have for their little ones; especially if they be in an age unable to help themselves; but that this

natural passion may not hurry us beyond the limits prescribed by Reason and piety ; consider well the promise that God made to *Abraham, I am thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee*, Gen. 17. and what *St. Peter* told the Jews, *to you and to your Children was the promise made, and to all such as are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call*, Acts 2. especially, meditate well upon and Imprint in our minds that which God speaks unto you from Heaven, by the Prophet *Jeremiah. Leave me thy Fatherless Children, and I will give them to eat, and let thy Widows trust in me*, Jer. 49. God is the Father of us all, but more especially of the Fatherless, he hath compassion of them, and provides for all their necessities ; thy Children are more tender to him than to thee, for thou hast been but a feeble instrument in his hand to put them into the world ; but he is the Creator of their Soul, the fashioner of their Body, and the redeemer of them both : He loves them with a stronger and more constant Love than the best Fathers, and the most tender-hearted Mothers ; Therefore he assures us by his Holy Prophet, that when the Mother should forget the Child, unto whom she gives suck ; and when she should have no pity of the Fruit of her Womb, he will never forget us ; so that all the Children that fear God, may say as *David, When my Father and my Mother should have forsaken me, the Lord will receive me*. Psal. 27.

Seeing that *Job* hath had a care of the Orphans *Job* 31. and *Pharaoh's* Daughter hath had compassion of the Tears of a little strange Child, how much more shall God, who is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, have pitty of Children, that he hath redeemed with the precious Blood of his only Son ? *Exod.* 2. *2 Cor.* 1. Seeing that he hears the cries of the young Ravens, he will sooner hear the Prayers, Sighs and Tears of his Servants Children, *Psal.* 147, *Matt.* 6 he cloaths the Grass of the Fields which to day is, and

and to morrow is cast into the Oven, *Gen. 21.* how much rather will he cloath your Children, O ye of litte Faith ? Doth your Heavenly Father nourish the Birds of the Air, and will not he rather feed your Children, that are better worth than all the Birds together *Iohn. 4.* In shor., seeing God hath had compassion of little *Ismael*, and of the Children of *Nimroy*, how much rather will he regard Children that have been sanctified to him from their Mothers womb ?

Our Lord Jesus Christ when he was on Earth, took up in his Arms the little Children that were brought unto him, laid his hands upon them, and recommended them to God his Father; and now that he is in Glory, his Love and tender compassion for them, is no less; Therefore if we offer him our Children with all our hearts, he will take them into his protection, he will stretch over them the Arms of his Mercy, and will never take them away again. In shor., seeing that he promiseth to them the Kingdom of Heaven, and his Eternal Felicities, he will never withhold from them things needful for this present life.

We can do nothing without God, but God can do all things without us, A great many Children become debauched, and are spoild in their Parents over-sound tuition, whereas many that are out of their sight, and that live when they are departed; shew good examples of Piety and Godliness, for example, in *Isaak's* House, in the presence of this Holy Man, there was a prophane *Esau*, a Glutton; whereas *Jacob* that lived at a distance from his Parents, when he fled for fear of his Brother, had always before his eyes the fear of *Isaack his Father*, *Gen. 27, Gen. 31.* that is to say, the God whom his Father worshiped. In *Jacob's* House, *Ruben* defiled his Father's Bed, in an incestuous manner whereas *Ioseph* in *Potiphera's* House, chose rather an appearent death, and present sufferings, than to touch his Masters Wife, *Gen. 39.* *David* had the unhappiness

to see some of his Children guilty of Incest and Murder; whereas *Joas* and *Josias*, two Orphan-Princes, in their tenderest infancy became Vertuous and Religious Kings, zealous for the service of God. How many Children are there who notwithstanding all the care and labour of their Fathers, fall into extremity of misery? How many are taken from their Parents embraces, and dragg'd from thence to the Gallows? whereas there are others that without Father, or Parents assistance, dont only escape grievous dangers, but rise to Honours and Dignities, as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, *Daniel* in *Babylon*, and *Esther* that was Fatherless, and a poor Captive, became a Queen; and moreover, God made use of her and of her credit,, to deliver his People from *Haman's* conspiracy. We see every day that God blesteth, in an extraordinary manner, many Orphans. Cast your Eyes upon the Children of the blessed Martyrs, and thou shalt perceive many that God hath made notable instances of his especial favours, and of the Mercy that he promiseth to shew unto thousand Generations of them that serve him, and obey his Holy Commands. Thou shalt find some that have much more happiness in this life, than the posterity of the Persecutors; Thou shalt see them with astonishment, bestow their Alms upon the Children of Such as have plundered their Houses, and spoiled their Goods.

Whilst you are yet in being, exhort your Children to fear God, to serve, and to addict themselves, with all their Heart, to the study of Piety, that hath the promises of this life, and the life to come: Teach them first to seek the Kingdom of God, and its Righteousness, and all these things shall be added to them over and above.

Finally, when your life should be much more useful to your Children than it is, remember what our Lord and Saviour saith, *He that loves Son or Daughter, more than him, is not worthy of him*: Heaven is far more excellent

Excellent than the Earth. The Salvation and the Happiness of our Souls is to be prefer'd to all the considerations of Flesh and Blood. It is not just, that such as have given us, or to whom we have given the enjoyment of a temporal life, should hinder us from the fruition of a Spiritual and Eternal Life. Besides, when we recommend them to God, we put them into the protection of a true, and of a wise Friend, who is acquainted with their necessities, who is so Good to procure them that which shall be needful for them, and Almighty to accomplish all things which may be for their advantage.

Let us therefore conclude, that it is the duty of a good Father that fears God, not to resist death, not to fly from it when the Lord calls; but according to the good example of the Antient Patriarchs, he ought to end his days willingly with the praises of God in his mouth, and with exhortation to his Children to love him, fear him, and serve him with all their heart, to continue in his Holy Covenant, and to prefer him to all the Riches and Honours of this miserable Earth. And as when our Saviour had bestowed his Blessings upon his Disciples, a Cloud carried him out of their sight into Heaven; Likewise when a good Christian shall have thus given his Blessings to his Children, he will shut his eyes to all inferior things, and think upon nothing but upon the Eternal Bliss of the Heavenly Paradise.

If God calls us to himself in a miserable and wretched time, when our beloved Infants are weeping about our Bed, ready to say to us, as *Isaack* unto *Abraham*, *My Father, here is Wood, a Fire, and a Knife, but where is the Beast for a Burnt-offering?* Gen. 22. God causeth the visible signs of his heavy displeasure to appear every where. In every corner we see nothing but Fire and Sword. Death's frightful Image, and the fearful appearance of Massacres, do scare and terrify us; Destruction

on is come into the Holy places, the Fire hath reacht as far as Gods one Sanctuary, and no body is able to deliver us. The deluge of God's wrath hath overspread our Land in such a manner, that, as *Noah's Dove*, we cannot find where to pitch our feet. All our expectation is, that God would also reach down his hand unto us from above, to receive us into that Ark which is above the Heavens, and unto which your Soul is now departing, *Gen. 8.* If our dear Children speak unto us in this Language; Let us, with the courage, assurance, and faith of the Father of the Faithful, return unto them this answer, *My Children, the Lord will provide, Gen. 12. Rom. 4.* It is he that acts beyond appearance, and against all hope, who causeth the dead to live, and calls things that are not, as if they were; he will send to you his good Angels to help you in all your necessities when you shall be reduc'd to the uttermost misery, ready to receive the last stroke of death; God's hands will stop the sword of his justice, he will change your crying and fears into joy and Eternal gladness. There will be some Holy and devout Soul, that loves the publick peace and tranquility, that will bring to you the Olive-branch of Peace. God can appease the Tempest with his breath, at his Command the winds will be still, and the roaring Waves that are ready to devour you, will return to their former tranquility. Otherwise he will preserve you miraculously alive in the midst of the greatest troubles, and most fearful confusion. And as *Abraham* found a Lamb intangled in a Bush; Likewise in the midst of the sharpest storms of affliction, and in the most intricate difficulties that you dread, you shall find unexpected sweetness and comforts. And as several coulours of the beautiful Rainbow, appear upon the Cloud, whence proceeds the Storms and the Rain; Likewise thus, in the greatest afflictions, God will give you some testimonies of his fatherly care, and of his Divine love. The assurance that you shall repose in God, shall never

never be confounded, for the love of God is spread in your hearts by the Holy Spirit, that he hath given you. The hotter the fire of affliction shall be, the greater, and the more miracles it shall bring forth. The higher the waters of your Flood shall rise, the nearer they will approach your Souls good, and the nearer you will draw to Heaven, the place of your Souls birth: Comfort therefore your selves, my dear Children, and assure your selves, that by the favourable assistance of God's Grace and Mercy, we shall see one another again speedily. I shall not return to you, but you shall come to me, for I am going to that large and magnificent Dwelling, whither our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is gone before, to prepare a place for us, and where he will embrace us all. I am going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God.

A Prayer and Meditation for a King and a
Sovereign Prince, who prepares for
death, by reposing himself up-
on God's providence.

O King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who hast been Graciously pleased out of thine especial goodness, to make me a living Image of thine Almighty Power, and a visible expression of thine Heavenly Glory; suffer me not to be lifted up in pride, by that Power and Majesty with which thou hast clothed me. That I may not imitate that vain glorious, and prophane Monarch, who discovered his impious mind in these terms. Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the House of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty. But give me Grace to adore the Scepter of him who hath established me, to humble my self before the Throne of thine universal Empire, I have so much the more reason

son thus to abase my self, because I am to appear before thy great Tribunal, not only as a man, to answer for my actions, but also as a Prince : I must there appear to give up an account of my publick Stewardship, and of so many thousand Souls committed to my care. If at any time, the splendor and glory of my Crown dazzle my Eyes, and delude my fancy for if fond flatterers sing at my ears, A voice of God, and not of Man. O let me then remember the frailty of my corruptible Nature, I am born as other Men, and subject to the same passions, and the same infirmities ; Death will have no more regard for me, than for the vilest of my subjects, it will not treat me with more civility than them ; It will enter as boldly into my Palace, as into the Huts of my meanest Soldiers, and into the Cabins of the most contemptible Sheperds ; It will break my Scepter in pieces, as easily as the Beggars staff, and trample upon the Flowers and Jewels of my Crown, in the same manner as upon the grass of the field. My Life, as that of my Slaves and Vassals, is but the breath of my Nostrils, a wind that vanisheth away, a shadow that will quickly disappear. O God of all flesh ! whilst thou continuest unto me my life here below. Command in my Heart, and amongst my affections Govern me by thine excellent Wisdom, and by thy Royal and Divine Spirit. Seeing that by the Kings Reign, and Princes do Justice, give me Grace to lift up mine Eyes always unto thee, and to employ all the Power and Authority which I have received from thee, to thy Honour and Glory, and to the advance of thine Heavenly Kingdom, that I may look upon my Subjects as thy Creatures, formed after thine own Image, and as thy Children redeemed with the Blood of thine only Son, if thou hast been pleased to put a difference between them and me. O that I may also consider that there is a more vast difference between me Dust and Ashes, a Worm of this vile Earth ; me, a nothing, and less than nothing, and thine Eternal Being. O great and living God ! whose Power is infinite ; when thou art pleased to send these Orders

to the richest, and to the most powerful Monarchs, Sons of men return; at the same instant they are not able to make resistance, but they must needs return to Dust, and with them all their contrivances, all their high and glorious purposes vanish away. O Sovereign Monarch of the World, when thou shalt forewarn me by any of thy Servants, or signify unto me by any other means, that thy pleasure is to take me from my Throne, to remove me from my Principality, and to separate me from my self; instead of troubling and afflicting my Soul, as an Heathen Prince, give me grace to shew a noble constancy, and a Cristian resignation, to thine Holy and Divine pleasure. If thou dost with one hand, write the Sentence of my Death, I know that thou wilt sign with the other, the irrevocable Decree, for me to go and take possession of a life infinitely happy. Alas great God, what are all these Territories that I must leave, in comparison of the Celestial Inheritance which thou hast prepared for me, from the Creation of the World; for all the Earth, if compared with the Heavens, is but a point; and what are all the inferior Crowns that fade away, and fall to the ground, in comparison of the uncorruptible Crown of Glory that waits for my coming, at the end of my mortal Race; O how willingly shall I cast off this Purple, this Royal Attire, to put on the precious Robes of Light and Immortality, reserved for me in thine Heavenly Paradise? How joyfully shall I put down this Scepter, to take into my hands the flourishing Branches of Palms that I see in the possession of thy Triumphant Saints? O Almighty King of Kings, thou hast entrusted me with the Governance of this Kingdom and Principality, I return it willingly into thy Divine hands; Thou hast subdued my people under me, and taken me out of many Waters, Thou hast justified my Right to these Crowns by a gracious and a miraculous, Restoration. O let me never forget thine infinite goodness so visibly declared to me and my People. How innumerable are thy Mercies? O Lord! Let therefore the former experience I have had of thy goodness, encourage

courage me to cast willingly my Self, my Life, my Crown, and my Kingdoms, into thy Divine hands. And while I yet remain amongst the living, give me Grace, O good and merciful Saviour, to wean my self from the world and worldly pleasures. Give me a hearty distaste of all unsatisfying delights of the Body, and a true relish of the immortal contentments of the Soul. Let the nearer approach of my death make me to draw nearer to thee in love and obedience. Give me power to overcome all carnal temptations. O that the excellency of my Place and Dignity, the precious Blood of my Saviour, with which thou hast washed my Soul, and that immortal Bliss prepared for me, might fill me with an hearty loathing, and contempt of the vain and unprofitable Delights of the World, that my Soul may not be fettered and enslaved to those filthy vanities, so far below the excellency of its Being. O Gracious God! with my Person I leave to thee the disposition of my Scepter and Kingdoms, thou art able to give to my successor the same Piety, Zeal, and Love, for thy Truth that I have always expressed; I leave to thee the care and preservation of that Religion which thy powerful hand hath planted amongst us; thou art able to cause it to flourish in the midst of so many envious attempts of adversaries. Let me not therefore distrust thy good providence, but grant to the person that thou hast appointed to succeed me, a Love and Fear of thy Holy Name; enrich his Soul with all Divine Graces, and Royal Vertues: My God and my King, thou gavest me an earnest desire of building thee a Temple as to David, a Man after thine own heart. I have labour'd to recruit, in my days, the senseless divisions of my people. but seeing that it is not thy pleasure that I should accomplish such a glorious Work; Give to my Successor the Grace and Wisdom, as to Solomon, that he may perfect the pious designs that I have begun. Establish his Throne with true Religion, and sincere Reformation. Let Justice and Peace flourish in his Reign. Let Truth prosper, Charity and Love enflame the Hearts of thy People. Let all his neighbours bless him. Let him

him have as many Guards as Subjects, and as many Fortresses as Hearts in his Dominions. But especially good God, give him grace to build thee a setled House in these Nations, and to raise it up to the highest pitch of Glory and Happiness, that is possible, on Earth. In the mean while, I shall depart out of this life, and go to Glorify thee in the magnificent Palace of immortality, where I shall cast down my Crown at the feet of the Lamb, and adore him who liveth for ever and ever, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Vice-Roy, or a Governour.

O Almighty Governour of this great World, seeing that thou hast granted to me the honour of representing the Person of my Prince thy living Image; it is but just that I should return unto thee my unfeigned thanks, for such a special Favour, for I should not have this Power, if it were not given to me from above; and if thou who art the King of Kings, and holdest, in thine Almighty hand, the Hearts of Princes, hadst not caused the superior Powers to favour my Person. Give me Grace never to forget that the Persons that I am to Govern, are not my Slaves, but the Subjects of my Prince: moreover, they are thy Creatures and Children, it belongs not to me to dispose of them at my pleasure, according to my passions, but to observe the Orders that have been given me, and to obey thy Divine Commandments. Let me behave my self as if my Prince were always, and every where, at my elbows to be a witness of all my actions. But especially, let me remember that I am always before thine holy Eyes, that behold my Heart, and read my most secret thoughts. Let me consider night and day, that I must give an account to my Great Master, of the Stewardship intrusted in my hands; and that I must one day appear before thy dreadful Tribunal, where dis-

guising

gushing and lying will nevertake place, If whilst I am diligently employed in the Duties of mine Office, and managing my business, with all the care and faithfulness that I am able, Death comes to call me away out of the world: give me such a courage that I may not be afraid, but that I may quit my Dignities without repining: for the Honour of Governing a Kingdom, or a Monarchy, or of Commanding us any worlds, is nothing in comparison of the Glory and Happiness prepared for me in Heaven. Let not the care of the time to come, trouble the quiet of my Soul; thou canst raise up other Governors, unto whom thou canst grant a Spirit of Wisdom and Discretion, with an happy and glorious Governance, whilst I shall rest for ever from all my labours and cares, and when I shall have overcome Satan, the World, Sin, and Death, and kept thy Works until the end, thou wilt give me into my hands a never-fading Palm, thou wilt put upon my Head a Glorious Crown, and into my mouth the Songs of the Blessed, in whose company I shall sing Praises and Thanksgivings unto thee for ever and ever, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a General of
an Army. and for a Captain.

O God of Hosts, I have been perswaded that this employment, in which I have engaged my self, for the service of my King and Countrey, would not be displeasing to thy Divine Majesty; seeing that thou hadst appointed Military Laws unto thy People, and hast been so Gracious to them, as to govern their Armies; march out before them, and Command in Chief, when they have encountered with their Enemies. Although thy Son is the Prince of Peace, his first Minister and fore-runner did not forbid the use of Weapons to the Soldiers that resorted to him, but only to be content with their wages, and to do violence

to no man ; besides, the Holy Apostles teach us, that it is not in vain that thou hast put the Sword into the hands of Sovereign Princes and Kings, who are the Images of thine Almighty power, and of thy uncontroulable Justice. Let me never appear at the head of an Army, or of a Company, but let me Imagine my Prince to be there present, as if I were to fight before his eyes ; but let me chiefly remember, that I am in the sight of thy Holy Angels, and of thee, who art the King of Kings, of all the Nations of the world, and of their Armies. Let not the power which thou hast given me over others, cause me to neglect the obedience that I owe unto thee my great God and Creator : Let not the honour of being a Captain, make me forget that I am a Soldier of Jesus Christ, who Judges, and Wars according to right. Let not the Sword that I carry at my side, hinder me from receiving into my Heart the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, that is sharper than a two-edged sword, that searcheth to the division of the Soul and Spirit, Joints and Marrow. Give me with this Heavenly Sword, the Brest-plate of Righteousness, and the Helmet of Salvation ; and especially, give me the Bukler of Faith, that I may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil. O my God ! cloath me with the Strength and Vertue of thy Holy Spirit, that I may resist all my spiritual Enemies, and obtain a Glorious Victory. Give me Grace to overcome Sin, the World, and my Self ; all my Passions and wicked Lusts, that I may see Hell confounded, and Satan crush'd under my feet. Lastly, Give me strength to fight with courage against Death, and to overcome it, O great and living God ! it is not necessary that any should remember me that I am Mortal, because Death is to be seen every day before me ; I walk continually upon its Footsteps, if it gives me an assault in the midst of my Prosperities, and in the first increase of my Glory, I shall then go to obtain, a more happy and magnificent Victory than these earthly ones ; for it is far more Honourable to conquer Death, and triumph over Hell, than to be a Con-

querour of thousands of Mortal Men. And if this cruel death carries me away in a time that my Life and Services are so useful to my Prince and Countrey; Let me learn to rest upon thy wonderful Providence, that cannot want Captains and Soldiers; Thou wilt raise up after me, more happy and victorious Commanders, but I shall enter into thy Heavenly Rest and Peace, that reigns in thy Kingdom. Lord Jesus! I shall gather the fruits of a blessed immortality, which have been purchased by thy wonderful Victories, and by thy glorious sufferings, and I shall share in the joy of thine Eternal Triumphs. Let this death therefore come when it pleaseth, I shall be ready to say to it as St. Paul, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which, the Lord, the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Judge or Magistrate.

O Glorious Judge of Mankind, who first honoured me with this noble employment, and put into my hands the sword of Justice. Let me always remember that I am not called to this noble Office by Man alone, but by thee who lifts up and pulls down, who raiseth the poor out of the Dust, to make him sit with the Mighty. Enlighten my understanding with thy Divine Knowledge, and strengthen me with that Spirit, which thou gavest to Moses, and to his Judges in Israel. Give me grace to do the duties of my Office faithfully, and to be an uncorruptible Judge. Let my Ears be always open to hear the cries of the afflicted, but shut to all unjust suggestions, so that the wind of unlawful favour may never be admitted. Let me, without any respect of persons, render unto every one what is his right, and that nothing may hin-
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der me from condemning the guilty, and justifying the innocent. Let it never happen to me to follow my passions or the Lust of others, but let me be a faithful interpreter of thy Holy Laws and Commands. At every time that I sit to judge thy people, let me remember that thou art amongst the Judges, and seest their most secret thoughts. Let me always consider, that when I have done judging others, I shall be judged my self, and nothing shall be able to oppose the Decrees of thine infinite wisdom. If at any time the considerations of Flesh and Blood tempt me to evil, let me recal to mind my approaching Death, that I may be bridled with an Holy Dread; let me consider that it warms me already to appear in person before thy Tribunal, where I must give up an account, not only of my Words, and of my Actions, but of my most secret Thoughts, and of the most plausible Acts of Judicature. O Lord, thou hast Eyes to see into the very depths, an Ear to listen to the whisperings of the Heart, and a powerful Hand to find out the Guilty. When I think upon that Glorious Throne, upon which, whole Legions of Executioners of thy Justice, do continually attend, I should tremble for fear, were it not that the Judge is my Advocate and Redeemer, and that he is ascended up into Heaven, there to intercede and prepare for me a place. O let me therefore willingly quit these vain Honours of the World, that pass away on a suddain; Seeing that thou preparest for me above, a Dignity, far more Excellent, Eternal, and Unchangeable. Let me cast off, without murmuring, this Robe where Worms do breed, and so many cares that consume my Heart. Let my Soul put on, with transports of joy, the Heavenly Garments of Light and Glory, that will render it Eternally happy. Let me go down from this Seat of Judicature, without grief, seeing that the Lord Jesus promiseth to every one that overcometh, that he will make them to sit with him upon his Throne. When I am gone from hence, thou wilt raise up wise and uncorruptible Judges, that shall judge thy People according to Justice and Equity.

In the mean while I shall enjoy the sweet and comfortable effects of thine Eternal Mercy, which thou hast discover'd in thine only Son, who hath been made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, Amen.

**A Prayer and Meditation for a Minister
of the Gospel who beholds Death
with Joy and Comfort.**

O Universal Shepherd, and Bishop of our Souls, I cannot sufficiently acknowledg and admire the Graces and Mercies which thou hast bestowed upon me; thou hast called me to an Office, in which the Angels of Heaven esteem it an Honour for themselves to be employed, and in which thou thy self hast been diligent during the days of thy Flesh, thou hast been pleased to make me one of the Ministers of thy People, and to commit to my trust, that which thou dost cherish, as the dearest and most precious thing of the World, namely, thy Church, for which thou hast expressed so much love, as to give thy self for it, and to redeem it with thy precious Blood. But alas, my Lord, and my God, who is sufficient for these things? The employment is heavy and painful, and I am weak and feeble. The World hates and persecutes us most vehemently, and the Devil, like a roaring Lion, walks continually about us, to seek to devour the Shepherd with his Flock. In thine own inheritance I am forced to swallow many bitter Fruits, and drink Waters of affliction. I find more Briers and Thorns, than Flowers and Roses; They that should encourage me in the midst of so many Labours, do often weaken my Hands, and afflict my Heart; that which should cause my greatest joy, and fill my Soul with the sweetest Comforts, is the occasion of my deepest sorrows, and of my most violent grief. Merciful Lord, whilst thou

art pleased to leave me in this mortal Life, and in my Ministry, accomplish thy Vertue in my weakness, and do thou the work which thou hast enjoyn'd to me thy poor Servant. Open the door wide to the Gospel of thy Grace, that all people of the Earth may learn to serve and worship thee in Spirit and in Truth. Defeat all the Counsels, and all the strength that riseth up against thee, and bring all thoughts to thine obedience. Let the World be confounded in all its purposes, and let it never have the power to scare me by its threatenings or to corrupt me by its fair promises. Let Satan once more fall from Heaven as a Lightning, and let him be for ever shut up in the bottomless pit. Shut up the mouths of all false Prophets, and let thy Truth be victorious over Error, that we may see the Congregations of thy true Catholick Church increase in number of persons, that may worship thee with more Affection and Zeal, or rather increase in them thy Grace and Heavenly Blessings. O let me always consider, that the Sheep that I am to feed belong not to me, nor to any mortal Man, but to thee Lord Jesus, who hast created them by thine infinite power, and redeemed them by thy wonderful Goodness. Thou hast willingly offered thy self to the sufferings of a painful death, that thou mightest deliver them from the Wolf's Paw, and Claws of the infernal Lion. Let me remember that I am shortly to appear before thy Glorious presence, and to give thee an account of my Stewardship. O Lord, who knowest all things, unto whom nothing is hid, thou seest the very bottom of my Heart, and spiest my most secret thoughts. Thou knowest how faithfully and affectionately I have been employed in thy service; I have led thy Sheep to the wholesome feeding of thy Heavenly Pastures. I have led them to the Waters that burst forth unto Eternal Life; my Conscience bears me witness before thee and thy Holy Angels, that I have declared nothing, neither by word nor writing, but that which I firmly believe to be agreeable to the Oracles of the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists. I have drawn out of the Sacred Treasuries of thy Word, things new and old,

for the beautifying of thy House, and for the instruction of such as dwell there. I have labour'd day and night in the things that thou hast put into my heart for thy Glory, for the advance of thy Kingdom, and the comfort of thy Children. In the important passages of my life, I have not taken counsel from Flesh and Blood, but I have preferred the Honour of thy great Name, and the Glory of thy Divine Truth, to all Earthly advantages, and to my particular interest. I have despised all the Riches of this World, and the Honours of the Age, for the sake of the spiritual Treasures, and of that Heavenly Light which thou hast put into me, as into an Earthly Vessel, that all Glory may be ascribed to thee, who art the Author of all good, and of all perfect Gifts. My most delicious Meat, and my most pleasant Drink, was to do thy Holy Will, and to perfect thy Work. I have taken a singular delight in declaring the wonderful Councils of thy Wisdom, and discovering the Mysteries of thy Kingdom; I have shared in the evils and sufferings of thy Members, I have not been sparing of the comforts which thou hast furnished me in all my afflictions and temptations. Thy Holy Law is in my Heart, and thy Gospel is there engraven with the finger of thy Blessed Spirit. Thou hast kindled in me an earnest desire of saving Souls, and bringing them to Righteousness. O Lord, who searchest into the bottom of the most secret Hearts, Thou knowest that I may say with the Holy Prophet, The zeal of thine House hath eaten me up. Or with the Apostle, The care of thy Church cometh upon me daily: But for all this, I pretend not to be justified in thy presence, I am so far from resting upon my own Righteousness, and of being puffed up with the opinion of my deservings; that I confess my self a poor and a miserable sinner; therefore with my whole Heart, I desire the forgiveness of my great imperfections and miscarriages, which I have been guilty of in thy service; I have not been enflam'd with a Charity pure enough, nor with a disinterested Zeal; I have been sometimes too indulgent, and sometimes too severe in the reprobation of

of Vice, and I have not been as I ought, the Director of my Flock, in all manner of good Works: the love of my self hath crept in with that affection that I owe to thee alone, and I have not served thee only for thy sake, and for thy Divine perfections; but also for the expectation of the Rewards which thou hast promised to thy faithful Servants, when thou shalt render ^{us} unto every one according to his Works. I have been too sensible of the wrongs done to mine own Person, and especially, when I have seen my best deeds misinterpreted, and my most charitable cares requited with ingratitude; I have not always possessed my Soul with patience, and I have not had that Meekness, Love, and Humility, which thou Divine Jesus hast recommended to me, by thine example on Earth. O Lord, if thou shouldst treat me according to the exactness of thy justice, and require at my hands the Souls that are perished by my negligence, or evil example, I should be cover'd with shame and confusion, and I should soon be cast, with the unprofitable Servant, into the Eternal Torments of Hell, where are weeping and gnashing of Teeth. But O Merciful Lord, thou art goodness it self, Love, and the very being of Charity; Thou acceptest the Will for the Deed, and the Undertaking for the Performance, and thou hast thy Arms always wide open to receive thy poor Servants that weep for their mistakes, and that humbly prostrate themselves before thee, to implore thy Mercy and Forgiveness. O Divine Saviour, Thou art rich in Goodness, and ready to cause thy Glorious Countenance to shine upon such as call upon thee, to their unspeakable joy and comfort, and upon such as draw near to thee, by a true and serious Repentance. Therefore I pour forth my Soul before thee, and acknowledge that thou hast heard me, and accepted the contrition of my heart, and heard the voice of my Tears. Thou strengthenest my Faith, raisest my Hopes, and fillest my Soul with refreshing and excellent considerations of thy Love: Thou causest me to tast the Salvation which thou often preacheest to others. I feel thy Gracious Hand drawing me to thy self. I see that

thou openest to me the Gate of Paradise, unto which I have had so many good and Holy Souls, that rest now in the enjoyment of thy Glory. Thou causest me to have the confidence of saying with the Holy Apostle, I know that God will show Mercy unto me, and receive me into his Heavenly Kingdom. O Good and Merciful Lord, I feel my Body consuming away, and my strength decaying, but thou art the Rock of my Heart, and my portion for ever. I see death coming apace to me, but instead of afflicting and frightening me, it comforts and rejoiceth my Heart, for it comes to put an end to this miserable life, that is no better than a languishing kind of death; it comes to take me from my continued labours, and loose me from my grievous and painful Fetters: Rejoyce, O my Soul! look up to that Rest that God prepares for thee above. The blessed time is come that I shall no longer endure the heat of the day, and the watchings of the Night, but I shall rest eternally under the shadows of the Tree of Life, and there satisfy my self with its delicious Fruits; I shall no longer withstand the contradiction of Sinners, nor hear the mocks of the sensual and factious minds. I shall no longer encounter with the enemies of thy Sacred Truth, nor endure the stings of my Lusts, but I shall live for ever in the blessed company of the Holy Angels, and rejoyce with the Glorified Saints; I shall preach no more against the obstinacy of Men, nor weep for the sins that disgrace thy Church and profession, nor complain of the injustice and affronts done to my Person, nor grieve for my own imperfections, but I shall sing for ever thy Divine Praises with the Seraphins, and the Congregation of the first-born, whose Names are recorded in Heaven. O Lord, who hast an infinite Power in thy Hands, and bottomless Treasuries of Mercy, be pleased to drive away from thy Flock all ravenous Wolves, and mercenary Souls, and raise up to this thy Church, a Faithful, Sober, Wise, and a Learned Clergy; bring in our dissenting Brethren, reconcile the differences that are among us, and give to us all a friendly compliance, that we may no longer be a hissing, and a

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by-word to our Enemies. Thou art yet able to clap an effectual Plaster to our bleeding wound, and to cure the distempered minds. Be pleased therefore. O great Physitian, of both Soul and Body, mercifully to look down from Heaven upon these Nations. Check that bold Spirit of division, that causeth so much disorder amongst us, and make us all sensible of our chief interests, which consists in a Blessed Union. Pour upon our Clergy, abundance of thy Grace, and give an happy success to their painful Ministry; but now I am going to serve thee above in Heaven, in a more glorious and excellent Ministry, where I shall meet with no trouble nor resistance, no weariness, grief, pain, sorrow, nor displeasure; I shall enter into the joy of my Lord, and receive, from his merciful Hand, the uncorruptible Crown of Immortality and Glory; I shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, and he shall be my Shepherd for ever; he will lead me to the Fountains of living Water, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Father of a Family.

Father of Eternity, I yield unto thee my unfeigned thanks, because thou hast made me an happy instrument, to put into the World, Children out of whose mouths thou mayest accomplish thine own praise, and who may serve thee here below, and worship thee for ever in Heaven, amongst the thousands of Angels. Whilst I have been in the World, I have brought them up in thy Love and Fear, I have caused them to suck from the Breast the Milk of Piety, and when they were come to an age of understanding, I have taught them to walk in thine holy Fear, and obey thy Commandments; I have laboured to shew them a good example, and to guide them in thy Truth. And now that I am ready to return unto thee, who art the Author of my life and being, the only source of my Happiness, I leave them

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in thy merciful hands, beseeching thee to look down upon them with the eyes of thy compassion; they are thine, Lord acknowledge thine own Image and Handywork. Thy Finger hath fashioned these Bodies, where so many wonders are to be seen. And these souls that animate and move them, are the breath and beams of thy Divinity. Thou hast engaged to be our God, and the God of our Posterity after us. Thy great and precious promises have been made to us, and to our Children. O Heavenly Father, I desire not that thou shouldest take them out of the World, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil. Cover them under the shadow of thy wings, and preserve them from those Miseries and Calamities, which thou hast threatned to send upon the Inhabitants of the Earth, for their sins; If thou dost chastise them, let it be with the Rod of Men, and with the scourges of the Sons of Men, but withdraw not from them thy Grace, and thy Fatherly compassions. Let the flames of affliction render their Faith more Pure, their Lives more Holy, and their Zeal more Sincere and Earnest, and let it prepare them for thee and thine Eternal Bliss. O Holy Father, thou seest that the Age in which we live, is wonderfully corrupt; that the Earth is inclined to Vice, and that Sin reigns every where. Thou knowest also, how weak, the Nature of Children is, and how inclinable to evil; therefore strengthen them, I beseech thee, with such Antidotes as may preserve them from the infection of the times. Suffer not the wickedness of the World to win upon thier affections, nor Satan to prevail upon them by his suggestions, nor evil company to spoil their pious Education. Give them an understanding to know thee, an heart to love thee, and Affections to embrace thee and thy Glory. Let thy Holy Angels guard them by night and by day. Let thy Providence defend them, thy Word instruct them, thy Promises comfort them, and thy Holy Spirit Regenerate them, and imprint in their Souls thy blessed Image. Give them neither Poverty nor Riches, but nourish them with Food convenient; but especially, give them that Bread which is come
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down from Heaven, which hath brought Life into the World ; make them to tast of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come ; inflame them with thy Love and Charity, and adorn them with Christian Vertues ; but chiefly , Sanctify them with thy Holy Spirit, and make them to become new Creatures : Seeing that without Sanctification, none shall see thy face in Glory. Confirm them for ever in thy Holy Covenant, and give them grace to transmit it to their posterity after them, as a blessed Inheritance, that thou mayest be Glorified by them from Generation to Generation, to all Eternity. Suffer not the World, nor Hell, to pluck them out of thine hand, that nothing may separate them from the love which thou hast shewed to them in Jesus Christ thine only Son. Let not Death terrify them, but let it rather rejoyce and comfort them, because, that it is the entrance that leads to the Glorious Dwelling of their Heavenly Father, and to the Celestial Paradise ; whatsoever change or alteration shall happen here below, let them always lift up their Eyes to thee, who art the same yesterday and to day, and shalt be the same for ever. Let them never forget their Duty to thee, from whom they have received their Being and Life, that they may prefer the Glory of thy Great Name, the Purity of thy Worship, and the hopes of thy Heavenly Kingdom, to all worldly Glory, Magnificence, Riches, advantages, and Pleasures of the Flesh. O God, who art the Creator and Father of their Spirits ; cause them to endure a thousand Deaths, and reduce them to nothing, from whence thou hast fetched them, rather than to suffer them to be enslaved to Vice, Error, or to Superstition that robs thee, O Great God, of thine Honour, to ascribe it to the Creature. Mericiful and Almighty Lord, I shall not say to thee as Esau did to Isaac, when he had blessed Jacob ; My Father, hast thou but one Blessing ? for I am certain that thou hast an infinite number, and many inexhaustible Fountains, of all manner of Blessings ; but I beseech thee, with all the Zeal and Earnestness that I can, to Bless my dear Children with thy Heavenly and especial

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Favours; take them into thy protection, bear them in thy Hands, embrace them with thy tender compassion, and let them be as dear to thee as the Apple of thine Eyes. Let thy fear be always before them, Let them love thee with all their Heart, and serve thee with all their Powers, that they may Glorify thee in prosperity and adversity, in Life and Death, that Christ may be their gain, whether they live, or whether they dye; but I am now leaving the world and my Children without Grief, or mistusting thy care of them; I am ascending with joy up to thee, who art my God, my Father, and their Father, and I trust in thy great and Eternal Mercies, that one day we shall see one another in thine Heavenly Kingdom, when we shall be admitted to behold thy Face, which shall fill us with unspeakable Gladness and Pleasure, Amen.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

The First Consolation against the fears of Death ;
 God will not forsake us in our most
 grievous pangs.

MAN is naturally afraid of pain, and abhors all sufferings and grief; now the most of us are perswaded that it is impossible to dye without enduring great pains; therefore they abhor Death, not so much for its own sake, as for the evils that it causeth to suffer.

That we may be able to drive away this ill-grounded Fear, and strengthen our minds against all apprehensions, we must first consider, that death is not so dreadful and painful, as commonly imagined; the Holy Ghost calls it a Sleep, and the Heathens themselves have said, that Sleep is Death's Cousen-german, and the Image of frozen Death: Now Sleep creeps upon us insensibly, it charms our Sences softly, and with invisible Fetters it ties and stops all our most active faculties; although we sleep every night, we are not able to discover how this happens to us. It is said of *Socrates*, one of the most famous Men of the first Ages, when he had, in obedience to the Decree of the Judges of *Athens*, drunk poison, when he felt the venom benumbing his Sences, and Death creeping into his Veins, he declared with a pleasant countenance, *That he had never swallowed any thing more sweet and comfortable.* Nothing can be imagin'd more pleasant, than the Death of the old Patriarch's. The Holy Scripture tells us, That when *Jacob* had made an end of commanding his Sons, he gathered up his Feet into the Bed, and yielded up the Ghost, *Gen. 49.* The same is related of King *David*, that when he had perswaded

Solomon

Solomon to fear God, and to do justice, he slept with his Fathers, 1 Kings 1. God is as merciful to many in these latter days, to cause them to dye in speaking and calling upon his Holy name; their Souls are not plucked from them by violence, but of their own accord they separate from the Body, and fly into Heaven with an Holy chearfulness. The separation of such Souls from the Body, happens without pain, grief, or suffering. Such are like to a Taper, that extinguisheth without any blast of Wind, of its own accord, when the Wax that kept it alive, and nourisheth its flame is totally spent. If you perceive some tost and tortured with grievous pangs in their death-bed, they are not properly the pangs of death, but the last struglings and motions of life; for I cannot imagine, that at the moment of the separation of our Souls from our Bodies, we suffer any pain, because at that instant, all the Senses are then lulled asleep, and our Bodies have no more strength, nor life to hinder the Souls departing.

Death is so far from being so dreadful and painful, as we commonly imagine, that on the contrary, it is that very thing that puts an end to all our pains and miseries. And I am perswaded that the diseases that bring us to our graves, are not so grievous as the other distempers, that we endure whilst we live here on Earth; such as are a cruel Gour, a Stone in the Kidneys, or a Canker in the Breast, for they are tortures that rack us continually, and a Fire that consumes us without ceasing. But when our pains should be far more sensible, and that we should have reason to impute them to death, we have no reason therefore to fly from it, or to abhor its approaches, for otherwise we have as good cause to curse the hour of our Birth, and weep for our Victories, for there is no Birth without pain, nor Victory without struggling; the most Glorious and flourishing Laurels are watered with Blood and Sweat.

The most excellent things are the most painful, and to speak according to the common saying, that *One nail drives another*, so one evil is a remedy to many other evils; we commonly seek with an earnest longing, as a good thing, that evil that frees us from the violent pains, that we can scarce endure. To be healed of our distempers, we swallow most bitter Pills and Potions, that gripe and torment our Bowels. To be freed from the Stone, we suffer a most painful cutting. And that the Gangreen that hath seized upon one of our Members, might not get to our Heart, we endure it with patience, to be cut off, whether it be Arm or Leg; therefore, when Death should be much more grievous, bitter, and more cruel than it is commonly represented; yet we ought to embrace it willingly, because that it delivers us not only from some disease or some particular pain, but generally from all pains, aches, and distempers. The Physick works not always out the humour that disquiets us. When we have drawn out a Stone from the Bladder, many times others grow in the Place that are worse. The Surgeons hand, let it be never so perfect, answers not always his Patients expectation; instead of removing his pain, it increaseth it; But the working and cure of Death, is always certain and never fails, the success is always happy to a Christian Soul.

That I may supply thee with some comfort in the midst of thy great pains and sufferings, *My Brother*, or *My Sister*, remember that these things happen not to thee by chance, but it is God who sends them to thee, according to the decree of his Wisdom. Ascribe not thy Disease to the influences of the Stars, to blind Fortune, but lift up thine Eyes to his appointment, who hath stretched out the Heavens, and Commanded the succession of the Seasons, and who is the Author and Lord of thy Life. We need not tempt God, as the *Philistians* did of old, and require from him a miracle, to
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know if it be his hand, for God assures us, that he himself inflicts the wound, and binds it up, that his hand strikes and heals again, *1 Sam. 5. Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, Job 5.* Who is able to say, that these things are come to pass, and the Lord hath not commanded them? doth not evil and good proceed from the appointment of the most High? There is no evil in the City, but God hath done it; that is to say, that there is no distemper, nor affliction, but he over-rules and governs it by his wonderful Providence.

This perswasion will stop our murmuring in the midst of our greatest troubles and violent pains, it will cause us to say with *David, I have held my peace Lord, and have not open'd my Lips, because it was thy doing.* Or if we offer to speak, it shall be in the language of a blessed Servant of God, *Lord, thou troublest me, but it is sufficient for me to know, that it is thy hand, Job 2.* As if he should have said, this Physick is very bitter, O great Physitian of my Soul and Body, but I will freely drink it up, because thou hast prescribed it: It is not just to receive good at the hand of God, and refuse evil; to complain of a disease that he hath sent us for a few days, instead of blessing him for the health which he hath continued unto us many years. In short, when our Souls should be troubled with the anguish of death, when drops of blood should come out of our veins, we must in such a case lift up our Eyes to Heaven, and say with our Lord and Saviour, Father, if it please thee that this Cup should not pass away from me except I drink it: Nevertheless, O Father, not my Will, but thy Will, be done, *Luke 21.*

The same consideration will keep us from falling into despair, and from fancying, that the evils will swallow us up. For seeing God sends both evil and good, and that he is faithful and just, that he is true and merciful, he will not suffer us to be tempted, that is, that we should

should be afflicted above that we are able, but with the temptation he will make away to escape, that we may be able to bear it, *1 Cor. 10.* He kindles not all his wrath at once, and employs not all his fury, he discovers not all the strength of his Arm, *Psal. 78.* but when his anger is hottest, he remembers to have pity and compassion on the afflicted, for he knows of what we are made, that we are but Dust and Ashes, *Hab. 3.* He remembers that we are but Flesh, that is to say, weakness it self, a wind that passeth away, and returneth not again, *Psal. 103.* He regulates his chastisements, not according to the horridness of our sins, but according to our great weaknesses, *Gen. 18. Psal. 78.* Therefore when God speaks of *David's* Son, the true and lively Image of the Holy Seed, with which he hath concluded an Eternal Covenant, he speaks in this manner, *If he commits sin, I will chastise him with the rod of Men, and with the stripes of the Children of men, but my mercy shall not depart away from him, 2 Sam. 7.* And *St. Paul*, speaking in general, of the afflictions, with which God visits his Children, *1 Cor. 10.* He styles them *Humane temptations*, to assure us that they shall never exceed the strength and power of our weak Nature.

The wise and experienced Physitian appoints neither Physick nor Bleeding to the Patient, until he hath well examined his Pulse, and understood thereby the disposition of his Body ; and shall not God's Eternal Wisdom, that never acts without good reason, and that perfectly knows the Pulse and Temper of our Souls, that searcheth our Reins, and that sees our very Heart, proportion his Physick and Remedies to our weaknesses ? for his design is to heal, and not to destroy us ; He once inflicted punishments upon *Babylon* by measure, and numbred the viols of his wrath, which he poured upon the seat of the Breast, and shall not this good God measure the Rods, and weigh the Afflictions with

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which he reproveth his Children? Shall not he number their Sighs and Tears? This consideration comforts King David, *Thou, faith he, O God, tellest my wandrings, put thou my tears into thy bottle, are they not in thy Book?* Ps. 56. Although Flesh and Blood may think otherwise, I am perswaded that Diseases may be looked upon as the sweetest and most favourable afflictions. It was *David's* perswasion; for when he was to chuse one of these three plagues, either War, Famine, or Plague, which is the most grievous, most hated, and dreadful of all distempers, he chose the plague; We should never forget the reason of his choice; *Let us fall now*, said he, to the Prophet Gad, *into the hands of the Lord*, for his Mercies are great; *and let me not fall into the hand of Man.*

The evils which God sends to us, are expressions of his Love, and of his Fatherly Care of us, for God begins his Judgments, that is, his Chastisements, at his own House, and shews most severity to the Servants whom he loves best, 1 Pet. 4. Therefore he tells the Angel of the Church of *Laodicea*; *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten*, Revel. 3. The greatest affliction that can happen to us in the World, is never to be afflicted; and the most grievous temptation, is never to be tempted; St Paul to the Hebrews speaks most excellently upon this subject, *Forget not*, faith he, *the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto Children, my Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons, for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons*, Heb. 12.

All things work together for good to them that love God, Rom. 8. The Diseases of the body are the Physick

sick of the Soul. The Aches which thou feelest in thy Body, are instructions of thy Mind. God intends to make thee sigh for thy sins, water thy Couch with thy Tears, and abhor the remembrance of thy former miscarriages, *Psal. 6.* The causes of thy present pain and grief. He intends to make thee partaker of his Holiness, *Heb. 12.* If it please God to sanctify his afflictions to thee, thou wilt be able to say with *David*, *It was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy Commandments. Before that I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy Word, Psal. 119.*

Although our Lord and Saviour was the only Son, and the beloved of the Father, *Heb. 5.* yet he learned obedience by things that he suffered; God hath predestinated thee to render thee conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born amongst many Brethren; God intends to strengthen thee with an Holy constancy, and to teach thee to possess thy Soul with patience, *Luk. 21.* He causeth thee therefore to learn by experience, that all Flesh is as Grass, and all the Glory of Man as the flower of Grass. He intends to teach thee how to humble thy self under his mighty hand, that he may lift thee up in due time, *1 Pet. 5.* When God purposed to bring the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, *Ex. 21. 5.* He caused the yoke of their grievous bondage to be more heavy, and loded them with more unsufferable burdens. For the same reason God sends afflictions, and gluts us with bitterness, because he would bring us to a loathing of the world, and of its Vanities, and to think upon Heaven and its Eternal Happiness, *1 Cor. 11.* He chastiseth thee that thou mayest not perish with the World; He punisheth thy Body, that thy Soul might be saved.

As the Gold is tried in the Fire, thus the Lord casts us into the flames of affliction, that our Faith might be tried, and appear more precious than fine Gold, *1 Cor. 5.* We Glory in God in the midst of Tribula-

tions, knowing that Tribulation produceth Patience Patience Experience and, experience Hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. Now Faith doth not make us ashamed, because the love of God is spread in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which hath been given to us. God will kindle again thy languishing Zeal, and enliven thy prayers, that they may be more acceptable to him. Tell me not that thy distemper is an heavey burden, that hinders thy Soul from lifting it self towards Heaven; and that thy grievous Aches dry up the Humidity of thy Tongue, and cause thy Lips to stick together; for I mean not the Prayers composed by art, but the Holy affections, and earnest Sighs of the Soul, sent up to God. A groan of an oppressed Soul, and a Sigh forced from us by necessity, and a Tear dropt from a penitent Heart, are far more acceptable to him, than Prayers of Forty hours, that come forth of an hypocritical Mouth.

When the Prophet *Moses* saw himself inclosed between *Pharaoh's* Army, and the *Red Sea*, he was so grievously perplexed, that he could not open his mouth; but God heard the voice of his Heart, and answered to his silent Request. King *Hezekiah* muttered as the Crane or as the Swallow, and groaned as the Pidgeon; and God had a respect to his groaning, and tears, and heard him from his Holy Sanctuary. The sighs of *Jonas* in the Whales Belly, mounted up through the waves of the Sea, and ascended to the sacred Habitation of God's Glory. The Cries of Jesus dying upon the Cross, have pierced through to the bosom of our Heavenly Father, and have moved the Bowels of his Eternal Mercies. In short, God speaks thus of all his Children, *Before they cry, I will grant them their request, and as they shall yet speak, I shall have heard them.* Therefore the Royal Prophet saith not only, *That God hath heard the Prayers, but hath heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their Heart, thou wilt cause thine Ear to hear.* For that reason, when the Apostle *St. Paul* makes
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mention of that Spirit that supports our weaknesſes, and that teacheth us to pray, ſaith, *That he crieth in our hearts Abba Father, and that he maketh request for us with ſighs and groans, that cannot be uttered,* Rom. 8.

Take good courage, *my Brother*, or *my Siſter*, and be not frightened at the ſight of Death. Thou ſeeſt a narrow paſſage, a way all beſet with Thorns and Bryars, but it is Heavens Gate, and the way that leads to thine Heavenly Paradife. For we muſt of neceſſity march through a Valley of Tears, before we can enter into the City of the living God, *Pſal.* 84. we muſt paſs through many tribulations to come to the Kingdom of Heaven, *Acts* 14. Blessed are they whom God afflicts, for they ſhall be comforted, *Matt.* 5. Blessed is the man that ſuffereth temptation, for when ye ſhall be ſufficiently proved, he ſhall receive the Crown of Life, which God promiſed to them that love him, *Jam.* 1. The Lord ſends thee this affliction, and this grievous temptation, not only for thine own good, and Salvation, but alſo for the benefit of others: by his wonderful Wiſdom he preſerves the communion of Saints, and ſo diſpoſeth of every one, that we all contribute to the building of his Tabernacle. Upon one he beſtows Riches, that he ſhould be bountiful in Alms-deeds; to another he gives Learning, that he might inſtruct the ignorant, and comfort the afflicted; he raiſeth others to great Honours and Dignities, that they might be able to protect the innocent, and deliver the oppreſſed; others are afflicted with desperate evils, and grievous and long diſeaſes; others are deprived of their moſt needful ſenſes, as of their Eye-ſight or of their Hearing, that they might edify their neighbours by an Holy Conſtancy and Chriſtian Patience. The Aſhes of poor *Job*, have more luſter than all the Gold and the precious Stones of the World. It is many ages ſince he endured grievous and dreadful calamities; Nevertheless, his patience is yet propoſed to us for our example,

and to the end of the world, it will always instruct the Church of God ; God teacheth thee by the evils which thou endurest, to be moved with mercy and compassion towards others in the same condition ; for as he required, that the Children of *Israel* should be gracious to strangers, because they had been strangers in the Land of *Egypt* ; Likewise, he sends to thee afflictions, that thou mightest pity the afflicted, and suffer with them as Members of the same mystical Body. This appears in Jesus Christ our Head, for although the chief end of his sufferings was to redeem us, and reconcile us unto God his Father ; nevertheless, the Holy Ghost informs us, That he was like unto us in all things, Sin excepted, that he might be a merciful High Priest, and have compassion of our infirmities.

Finally, the affliction that grieves thee, is not only sent to thee for thy Salvation, and for the instruction of thy neighbours, but also for the Glory of the Great and living God, who hath made and formed thee : for we may say of every disease that happens to good Men, as Christ said of *Lazarus's* distemper, *this sickness is not to death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it.* Thou mayest be severe to thy self, but thou must be charitable to others, and judge discreetly of thy Brethren's affliction ; when thou art in pain or trouble, think seriously upon thy miscarriages, and turn unto God with all thy heart. But when thou seest others cast upon a Bed of sickness, don't argue from thence, as *David's* Enemies, that it is because they have committed some grievous crime ; Rather consider, that it may be a means which God hath a design to employ to declare his Power, and his Servants Patience, Faith, Piety, and Vertues. Therefore our Lord and Saviour tells the Apostles, when at the Sight of Man, Blind from his Birth, they enquired from him, whether the Man had sinned, or his Father or Mother, because he was born blind ; *That nei-*
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ther the Man nor his Father, nor Mother, had sinned, but that the Works of God might be manifested in him, John 5. By these words we are not to imagine, that these persons were without sin, for there is none just, no not one; but we must understand that they were not guilty of any grievous sin, and they had not committed any such crime, as had drawn upon them God's vengeance from above. It was God's Will that this poor man should come into the World with that natural imperfection, that he might make him an instance of his Grace, and declare in him his Almighty Power: and that our Saviour, in giving him his sight, might make it appear that he was the true God, who fashions the wonderful Eye, and that he was the true Light that enlightens every man coming into the World, Psalm 94. John 1. Likewise, when some came to inform this Great and wise Saviour, what had happened to the Galileans, whose Blood Pilate had mingled with their Sacrifice, he replied in this manner, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, and slew them; think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luk. 13.

God is glorified divers ways by the afflictions and calamities which he sends to his Children. for first, he justifies them before all the world, from the calumnies which are cast upon them, and he discovers thereby, to all, the sincerity of their Love, and their unfeigned Obedience. Satan accuseth us for serving God for the advantages which we receive in this life, Job 1. and because he is pleased to protect and favour us by his over-ruling Providence; Therefore God removes many times from us, that which is pleasing and delightful to the Flesh; He gives us the Bread of Affliction for

our Food, and the Waters of Sorrow for our drink; He presents us with cups full of bitterness, and causeth his Rod to return upon us often. By these grievous temptations, he stops the mouth of the accuser of our Brethren, who accuseth them day and night before God, *Isai. 30.* He declares by that means to all the Enemies of our Salvation, and of his Glory, that we put our full confidence in God alone, and in his unchangeable promises, and not in the outward tokens of his Mercy and Favour, *Revel. 11.* He shews to all the World, that the Anchor of our Hope is nor fixed here below, but that it is cast into Heaven, where Christ is entred as our forerunner, *Heb. 6.*

As God is glorified in our Afflictions, he is also honoured by our deliverance; If the Land of *Judea* had not been peopled with deaf, dumb, lame, blind, decrepid, and possess'd with Devils, *Acts 9.* If *Eneas* had not been sick eight years; If a poor Woman had not been grieved with a Bloody Flux twelve years; If another had not been vexed with a disease that had bended his Body; If the sick of the Palsie had not been lying in his Bed thirty eight years; If the Daughter of *Fairus* had not been dead; If the Widows Son of the City of *Nain* had not been carried to his Grave; In short, If *Lazarus* had not been buried four days, the Glory and Divine Miracles of our Lord and Saviour had not been admired all over the World, *Matth. 9. Luk 13. John 5. Matth. 9.* Likewise our desperate diseases, and our unexpected recoveries, when humane skill can do nothing, declare to the most stupified Souls, that it is God alone that can give the wound, and bind it up, and that leads to the Sepulcher, and brings back again, *Luk. 7. John 11. Job 5. 1 Sam. 2.* God's deliverances of his People from their afflictions, are of two sorts; for either he takes away the burden from us, or else he stretcheth out to us his merciful hand, and helps us to bear it; either he removes our affliction, and pacifies

cifies our grief ; or he strengthens us with Power and Courage, and arms us with Patience and a generous resolution, needful in such a case. This appears in a notable manner in the Apostle St. *Paul*, for fear that he should be lifted up in pride, because of the excellency of his Divine Revelations, God had given him a Thorn in the Flesh, and had sent the Angel of Satan to buffet him, and to increase the bitterness and sharpness of his disease. This Holy man prayed often to remove it from him, but God took not this Thorn away from his Flesh, nor did not check that messenger of Satan that afflicted him ; but he delivered him from the inconveniences in a more illustrious manner ; for he strengthened him with his Divine Spirit, and enriched him with his Graces ; he made him feel the Vertue and Power of Christ within him, and accomplished his Vertue in *Pauls* infirmity : Infomuch that this great Apostle cries out in the deepest of his afflictions, with transports of joy, *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong, I can do all things in Christ that strenghtens me*, 2 Cor. 12. This may be also seen in the Martyr St. *Stephen*, for he was condemned to dye by a death, the most painful and grievous that we can imagine ; but God gave him such powerful Comforts, and fill'd his mind with such Joys, that his Face shin'd as that of an Angel. You must understand the words of St. *Paul* in that manner, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Acts* 6. *Heb.* 5. Jesus Christ having offered up Prayers and Supplications with strong Crying and Tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard, in that he feared ; for he was not altogether freed from the sufferings and torments of the Cross, but he underwent it couragiously, and was more than Couqneror in all things ; he drunk up the very dregs of the Cup of God's wrath, but by his Diviue Power, he overcame
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the strength of the poison; His Heavenly Father took him not down from the Cross, nor out of the hands of his Murderers, but he hath upon his Cross raised up his Glorious Trophies! the Cross hath been as his Triumphant Chariot. Likewise, when you see a Christian bear up in the midst of a grievous affliction, and overcome his grief by his constancy and patience, who instead of murmuring, rejoiceth, and comforts himself in his distresses; you may then conclude, that such an one is strengthened by God's Divine Spirit, who upholds him, and accomplisheth his Heavenly Vertue in his Servants infirmity. This is the most wonderful, and excellent of all Deliverances.

I confess, some approve this Discourse very well, and admit these Consolations in their ordinary diseases; but as soon as any extraordinary and violent griefs seize upon them, they are apt to murmur against God, and to complain that their punishment is too grievous. Some proceed further, to curse, as *Job*, the day of their birth, and being hurried into despair, are ready to cry out with *Cain* my punishment is greater than I am able to bear. Unhappy Man! Wilt thou imitate the barbarous Heathens, who curse the Sun when it burns them, and let fly their Arrows against Heaven when it Thunders, wretched Man! What will it avail thee to affront thy Creator? what advantage wilt thou reap from the Blasphemies which thou dost belch forth against the Son of Righteousness? miserable Worm of the Earth, less than Dust, and nothing, wilt thou undertake to contend against God, to pluck him from his Throne, and to break the invincible Arm of his strength? Dost thou imagine to stop the hand of his Vengeance, by offending and sinning against him? Wilt thou quench the fury of his wrath, by spitting in his Face? Believest thou, that he will stretch forth his hand to deliver thee and to increase thy Blessings, whilst thy mouth is open to blaspheme him, who is thy Sovereign Lord?

Listen

Listen well, I beseech thee, friend, to my advice, and I will draw thee out of the Abyſſe, where thou art unhappily fallen, and with Gods help I will cause thee to understand, that thou complainest wrongfully against him, who doth all things advisedly, and with Justice and Reason.

First, run over the whole course of thy life, and consider how many wicked deeds thou hast committed, some by indiscretion, others wilfully; how many words have gone out of thy mouth, how many thoughts have been entertained in thy mind, against the Commands of Almighty God. Consider seriously the number, and grievousness of thy sins and miscarriages; and thou shalt find, that Gods punishments are far less than thy deservings; and that for one sensible word and bitter pain that thou feelest, thou hast deserved many thousands; so that thou shalt have cause to confess with the Prophet Daniel, *O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of Faces*, Dan. 9. and thou wilt say with David, Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up, they are more than the hairs of my Head, therefore my heart faileth me, there is no whole part in my Flesh, because of thine indignation, nor rest in my bones, because of my sin, *Pf. 40.*

2. Consider how many there are in the world, more righteous than thou, who suffer more grievous and longer evils than thou hast hitherto endured, and yet have not had so much comfort and assistance. If thou comparest thy condition with theirs, thou shalt find that God spares and favours thee very much.

3. Cast thine Eyes upon the death and passion of our Lord and Saviour, who being righteous and innocent, hath suffered for us, wicked and abominable sinners. Thine affliction is painful, I confess, but that which this merciful Redeemer hath suffered for thee, was far more unsufferable. Let his Exclamations, his Tears,
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and drops of Blood which came out of his veins, be witnesses, and that earnest Prayer which he repeated three times upon his bended knees, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, that I may not drink it.* Let that doleful voice upon the Cross be also witness, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

4. Weigh in just and equal Scales of the Sanctuary, all the sufferings of this life, with the torments of Hell, which thou hast justly deserved, and compare them together, thou wilt quickly conclude, that all thy pains are nothing, if compared with the grievous tortures of that lake of Fire and Brimstone, where there are weeping and gnashing of Teeth. If thou art sensible of these vanishing pains, consider well, how much thou art obliged to the goodness of God, who hath freely pardoned all thine offences, and redeemed thee from that eternal and unspeakable Misery of the other life.

5. Thou must imitate those men, who having their Sight dimmed with the extraordinary splendor of bright Colours, or of a Body of Light, turn off their Eyes to look upon less offensive objects; instead of handling always thy wounds and Sores, instead of thinking of the afflictions that lye heavy upon thee, meditate upon the goodness and favours of God, vouchsafed to thee since thy Conception until now; I give thee leave to put in one side of the Scales, all thy crosses, losses, diseases, pains, and grief, upon condition, that in the other Ballance, thou wilt put all the Mercies, Favours, Blessings, and Deliverances which thou hast received from God's liberal Hand. It is true, thou groanest under thy Misery, and complaineest of thy condition; thou verily believest that there is none so miserable as thou art, so that willingly thou wouldest say with the Prophet *Jeremiah, Doth not this move ye, O ye that pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord*
hath

hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. But when there should be nothing else but this alone, that God hath called thee to the knowledge of his Holy Will; enriched thee with the Graces of his Divine Spirit, and sown in thy Heart the seeds of Eternal Life, and the blessed hopes of seeing his Face in Glory; thou oughtest to look upon thy self, as one of the happiest Creatures under Heaven.

6. Finally, thou must meditate with a Religious attention, upon the joys of Heaven, and the Eternal Blessedness of Paradise; for *I reckon* with the Apostle, *that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us*, Lam. 1. When we cast our Eyes upon the Earth alone, we judge it to be very spacious and large, our sight is lost in the contemplation of so many Provinces, Cities and Kingdoms; but when we compare it with Heaven, we find it to be but a point. Likewise when we look upon, and reckon up the hours, days, weeks, months, and years of our sufferings, the time appears very tedious and long; but when we compare all these parcels of time with Eternity, they seem to us but a moment when we should have been overwhelmed with evils and miseries, from the first instant of our entrance into the World, until the last of our going out. Yet we have reason enough to say with St. Paul, *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are Temporal, but the things which are not seen, are Eternal.* 2 Cor. 4.

The chief Spring of all our Comforts is God's Gracious promise of seasonable help in time of need; Imprint therefore in your minds these Divine passages, *When he that loveth me shall call upon me, I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him*, Psal. 91. *The Lord delivers from all temptations,*
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them that honour him, he is rich unto all that pray unto him. 2 Pet. 2. *He is near to all them that call upon him, yea, to all them that call upon him faithfully,* Rom. 10. *He accomplisheth the desire of the humble, he hears their cry,* Psal. 145. *The Righteous is encompassed with many evils, but the Lord will deliver him from them all,* Psal. 34. *Call upon me in the day of thy distress, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me,* Psal. 50. When a poor Subject is courted and visited by his Prince, in the time of his sickness, he looks upon it as a great favour, and an happiness indeed; And when we enjoy the presence of a dear friend, whom we desired to see in the midst of our most grievous pains, we are wont to say, *Methinks I feel no more pain, now that I have the satisfaction of your good company.* Now the Glory of God's Majesty, doth accompany the tenderness of his Love; He is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our afflictions. He is like that faithful friend who never forsakes us, for in our greatest calamities, he succours us, *Prov. 18.* He is the King of Kings, and yet our most cordial and sincere friend, who frequently visits the Houses of sorrow, and is near to every broken and bruised Heart, *Psal. 34.* The more we are oppressed with evil, the more he remembers us, *Psal. 136.*

Notwithstanding our Childrens imperfections and miscarriages, we cannot suffer to see them in distress, but we are moved with compassion, and perswaded to help them according to our ability, and shall thy God who loves thee more sincerely, and more cordially, than the best Fathers, and the most tender-hearted Mothers do their Children, forsake thee in the day of thy distress? This Merciful and loving Father, who hath taken thee into his protection, when thou didst enter into the World, and who since hath furnished plentifully all thy necessities; shall he deny his Gracious assistance now in the time of thy calamity? He
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who hath fulfilled his praise by thy mouth, when thou didst yet suck at thy Mothers Breasts; who hath crowned thy youthful days with his Divine Blessings, will not forsake thee now in thine old age, he will not cast thee off in thee last moments of thy life, when thy strength is decayed, and thou art scarce able to help thy self.

When we offer any assistance to our sick or wounded friends, we labour to lessen their pain; we employ all our skill, and discover our most excellent Secrets; at least, we endeavour to make them sensible of our displeasure and grief for their distemper by our Sighs and Tears, and by all good Offices; their complaints and outcries, are Darts that strike to our very hearts; Likewise our merciful God is sensible of our calamities, when he sees us oppressed with grievous pains, his Bowels earn, his Heart is as it were moved, and his tender Love for us is concerned; In all our afflictions he is afflicted, and whosoever toucheth us toucheth the very Apple of his Eye, *Hosea 1. Isai. 63.* He is said to weep and grieve at the torments that we feel, and to be sensible of our infirmities, *Luk 2.* He binds up our wounds, and pours into them his Divine balm; he cures the diseased Heart, and caused the bruised Bones to rejoyce, *Job 5.* He casteth into our beds of Sickness, his most excellent Perfumes, and drives from thence all grief and displeasure; when a pestilential Feavor hath seized upon you, this Heavenly Physitian can give you some Carduus Waters, powerful Antidotes to keep the poison from the Heart, *Jer. 30. Psal. 147. Psal. 51. Psal. 34. Cant. 1.* His Gracious hand can drive from thy Soul the venom with which the old Serpent labours to infect it; He will in thy need, clap upon thy Head, thy Stomach, or rather to thine Heart, not a bleeding Pidgeon, but the living and cherishing Vertue of his Holy Spirit; only discover to him this afflicted and diseased part or member of thy Soul of
Body

Body ; and he shall anoint it with the Oil of Joy and Gladness, that shall run down into thy Joynts and Marrow. If thou feelest thy self weak or fainting, say to him as the Spouse in the *Canticles*, *Comfort my Heart with wine*, Chap. 2. and he will not fail to present unto thee of the new Wine of his Kingdom. If thou art thirsty ask him some drink, and he will give thee of that *Water*, *which if a man drink, he shall never be athirst*.

My Brother, or *My Sister*, cast thy self upon God, for his Power is as great as his Love to thee ; he understands better than thou or we can, what is expedient and good for thee ; in his due time he will make thy pains to cease, and will pull out of thy Flesh its incomodious Thorn ; either he will drive from thee the Spirit that afflicts thee, or accomplish his Vertue in thine infirmity ; He will strengthen thee in such a manner, and with such Patience, Constancy, and Faith, and fill thee with so much extraordinary joy and comfort, that every one shall visibly perceive, that God himself is thy help, and that his Vertue sustains thee. O how sweet and pleasant is God's assistance to a Christian Soul ! it brings along with it so much pleasure and admirable delight ; it causeth such undeniable testimonies of our Predestination to appear ; it gives us so many rare fore-tasts of our Celestial Inheritance, that St. Paul doth not only prefer it to all the pleasures and Honours of the World, but he prefers it also to his being ravish'd into the third Heaven, and to his seeing unspeakable things which cannot be uttered, *1 Cor. 12.*

If afflictions are increas'd with Christ, Joy and Comfort increase also with him ; for as God commands Wine to be given to a Man whose Heart is oppress'd with sorrow, to drive away his sadness, and bury his troubled thoughts in oblivion ; Thus in the greatest evils, God supplieth us with the strongest and most cordial Consolations. It is in this occasion that he declares
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his greatest Power, and pours out most plentifully his Divine Graces, *Isa. 4.* When thou shouldest walk through the Flames, the Fire shall not burn nor touch thee; for as the Son of God was in the Furnace with *Daniels* three Companions in *Babylon*; Thus in thy most violent fits of the Feaver, in the midst of thy most grievous aches, he will satiate thy Soul, and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, *Dan. 5.* Or as a living Spring of Comfort that can never be stopt nor dried up. Let the Storms and Flouds beat against thee, Let the defluxions endeavour to check thee, *Isa. 58.* thou mayest say with King *David*, *I have set the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved, Psal. 16.* When I should walk in the valley of the shadow of Death, when I should have no other help nor assistance in the World, when there shall be no more strength remain in my Body, I would not fear; for, O God, *thy staff and thy Rod will comfort me, Isa. 26.* God will not only draw near to thy bed of Sicknes, but he will embrace and receive thee into his protection, he will kiss thee with the kisses of his mouth, and make thee taste of the sweetness of his Divine Comforts, *Cant. 1.* He will cherish thee as a Mother doth her Child, to pacify it, and make thee so sensible of his Love, that thou mayest say with the Spouse, *his left hand is under my head, and his right doth embrace me.* With his Gracious Hand he will wipe off thy cold sweat, and into his bosom he will receive thy sighs; thy groans and thy tears, he will gather up into his most precious bottles. And as it happened when our Lord and Saviour was in his Agony, when drops of Blood fell from him, the Holy Angels appeared to comfort him, *Luk. 22.* Likewise, in our greatest and most difficult encounters, when thou shalt be at handy-blows with death it self, his faithful Ministers, his Messengers, the Angels of his right hand shall visit thee, to supply thee with spiritual Comforts, *2 Cor. 5. Revel. 5.* And when

these earthly Comforters shall fail, he shall send to thee some of those powerful Spirits that wait before his Glorious Throne, *Dan. 7.* O good God, if we could but perceive the things that are of themselves invisible, and if thou didst but give us eyes, like unto those of the Holy Prophet, we should behold Legions of immortal Spirits flying about in the houses of Sorrow, with an intent to comfort the Christian Souls, *Isa. 6. 2 King. 6.* Finally, as the Sun with its Light, and the strength of its Beams, drives away the thickest Clouds, and comforts, with its delightful countenance, the face of the whole Earth; Thus Jesus Christ the Son of Righteousness, that carries healing under his wings, banisheth all sadness with the light of Divine Graces, *Mal. 3.* and with the presence of his Holy Spirit he drives away the most sensible griefs, and fills us with unspeakable joy, and with the Peace of God which passeth all understanding.

A Prayer and Meditation for a sick Person,
who desires to prepare for Death.

O Almighty and Gracious God! who hast created both light and darkness, and who dost, by the wisdom of thy Providence, bestow good and evil things upon us, I acknowledg that thine Hand hath cast me upon this bed of sickness, and that this disease proceeds not so much from the disorder of my Body, as from the corruption and extravagancy of my Soul; far be it from me to complain of thy justice; I adore thy Goodness and Wisdom. O Lord, how favourable are thy punishments, if compared with my deservings; I have miserably abused thy former Mercies, misspent that time of health that I received from thee, in whom we live, move, and have our Being. I confess, that
I have

I have loved the vanities of the World, and the satisfaction of this wretched Flesh, more than the Glory of thy great Name, or the Salvation of my Soul; therefore I could willingly water this Couch with my Tears. O God, who understandest all things, thou knowest that my weeping proceeds not from any fretful humour, but out of the sincere displeasure of having offended so good a Father and merciful Lord; In this thy chastisement, I feel the workings of thy tender compassion, and I perceive thy most wonderful Love. I see that thou dost not rebuke me in thy wrath, nor dost not correct me in thy fury; Thou dost not punish me as a Judge, but dost chastise me as a Father; so that this disease is a testimony of thy Love and of thy Fatherly care of me, for thou dost correct all them whom thou lovest, and causest them to feel the smart of thy Rod whom thou ownest for thy Children; therefore if we were without reproof, whereof all are partakers, we should be no longer Children, but Bastards: If this chastisement is at present grievous and painful, one day it will produce the Peaceable Fruits of Righteousness; and as at the end of Jonathan's Rod, he tasted Honey that comforted him and opened his Eyes; Likewise when I shall have felt the Rods of thy displeasure, I shall taste the sweet comforts and unspeakable joys of thine Holy Spirit, and my understanding shall be more enlightened. O Almighty and ever wise God, who drawest Light out of Darkness, and causest, that all things work together for good to them that love thee; it matters not how thou orderest this disease, so that it may advance thy Glory, and further my Salvation. Thou beholdest mine affliction and poverty, and thou knowest, better than I can, what is good and expedient for me. O great God, I know that thou canst do all things, and that thou givest the wound, and bindest it up; thou striketh, and thy hands must heal; thou castest into the Grave, and bringest up again. The most desperate and irrecoverable diseases thou canst cure; the dead thou canst bring to life again, and call the things that are not, as if they were. O

Almighty Physitian, thou canst not only vouchsafe thy Blessing to these Remedies prescribed and administred to me, but if thou speakest the word, I shall be perfectly whole and well again; But if thou judgest expedient to continue this disease upon me, continue, O merciful Lord unto me, and increase thy Fatherly assistances, and the comforts of thine Holy Spirit. Strengthen me with a Christian Patience, and with a resolution worthy of my honourable profession; seeing that thou art the Sovereign Physitian both of Soul and Body. I beseech thee, my God, if thou dost not remove the distemper of my Body, at least, pluck out of my Heart and mind all the grief and displeasure that torments me; Fill my Soul with thy Peace, Joy, Love, and Heavenly Comforts, while my Body languisheth upon this Earth, and while I am kept from my former societies of Men. Let my mind be lifted up to Heaven. Let my Soul delight it self in a familiarity with thee; I have lost too much time already about the affairs of the World, that is nothing but vanity and vexation of Spirit. Give me Grace to employ now these few moments of leasure, which thou dost grant to me, to think seriously upon my sins, to beg thy pardon with an earnest Repentance. Give me Grace to meditate upon thine unspeakable and eternal Mercy, to embrace it with a true and lively Faith, upon thy Glory, and the Happiness of thy Kingdom, that I may labour to attain unto it with transports of joy; so that I may say with the Prophet David, My Soul shall be satisfied, as with Marrow and Fatness, and my Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips; when I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the night Watches. My Sicknesse seems very tedious; but alas, Lord my Sins have continued longer, and all this pain that afflicts me, and forceth from me so many sighs, is nothing in comparison of the advantages and happiness that waits for me in Heaven. When the whole course of my life should be a continual languishing, it is but a moment

ment in respect of Eternity; And this moment of affliction produceth in us a weight of Eternal Glory, that excels all things else. O Lord, Let the distempers and pains of my Body turn to the health of my Soul, and a powerful obligation to the Practice of Piety and of all Christian Vertues. Let me learn thereby to renounce the World, and deny my self, and to cast my self wholly into thy Divine Hands, and submit my self to thy Holy Will. As Jesus Christ is gain to me, whether I live, or whether I dye, give me Grace to be ready to praise and glorify thy Mercy both in Life or Death. If it be thy pleasure to spare me my life, O that I may live more circumspectly than ever I have done, in the fear and obedience of thy Sacred Commandments; and as St. Peter's Wives Mother rose up from her Bed of Sickneß, to serve our Lord Jesus; if thou freest me from my plague, let me rise out of thy Couch, to glorify and serve thee until the last moment of my Life. But if thou art pleased to call me out of the World, here I am, O God, ready to do thy Will, and obey thee without the least resistance; for my Soul is already separated from this languishing Carcass, and resolved to follow thee; It is not grieved to see this wretched Body weakened and crazy, as an Habit worn out, because thou hast prepared for it a Garment of immortal Colours. It is not vexed, because this earthly Tabernacle decays, for it hath a more lasting Dwelling in Heaven, whereof thou hast been the Builder. I have long looked upon this Couch, as a representation of my Grave, where I shall shortly lye down to take my last repose; I have long expected Death, that will break in pieces the last link of this chain of Misery, to put a period to all my pains and grievance, to take me out of this woful and rotten Lodge that falls to pieces, to introduce me into a Glorious Palace of immortality, where thy Divine Majesty dwels, and where I shall for ever Glorify thee, with the thousands of Angels, and with all the sanctified Souls, Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a sick Person,
tormented with grievous pains.

4.

O Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, have pity upon me, thou knowest that I am vexed with fearful pains that disturb my Mind, and torment my Body; thine Arrows run through me on every side, and my Soul hath its fill of bitterness. Thy wrath hath torn me to pieces, and thou seemest to have set thy self against me. One depth calls for another. At thy Command, the Waves and Flouds have passed over my head; Thou hast given me many days of affliction, and nights of torment; I am like a person breaking upon a wheel, or burning in hot flames; I feel a fire that consumes me as a worm that gnaws, and darts that pierce through my Heart. Sure my sins must be abominable and grievous, seeing thou inflicttest this great punishment upon me, for thou art Mercy it self, and it is not willingly that thou afflicttest the Sons of Men. O good God, consider what thou art, and what I am; wilt thou stretch forth thine invincible Arm against the Leaf that the wind tosseth up and down? wilt thou declare the fierceness of thine Eternal displeasure against Chaff and Stubble? wilt thou let fly all thine Arrows against a wretched Worm of the Earth? and wilt thou cast out all thy Thunderbolts against a little Dust? O Great God, I am not a worthy Object of thy wrath, against which thou shouldest kindle all thy displeasure. Remember that I am but flesh, a Wind that passeth away and returneth not again; but rather remember Lord, that I am thy Child, and that thou hast redeemed me with the Blood of thine only Son. O my God, it is not possible for me to withhold my complaints, suppress my groans, and to dry up this torrent of Tears; my Soul is wearied out with this languishing life, or rather with this unmerciful Death: for is there

there any sorrow like unto my sorrow? Is there any torture or pain like unto my torment? When the Prophet Jonas saw a little Goard withered, that afforded him before a favourable shelter and shadow from the Sun-beams, when he felt them beating hot upon his Head, he cried out, Death is better to me than life. How much more cause have I to speak in this manner? I, of whom the strength is withered as the parched Ground in the midst of the Summer; who feel a Fire in my Bones, and an Heat in my bowels, that burns and consumes me by day and by night; Shalt not thine Almighty and Merciful Hand, that hath freed me from Hell, take me out also of this deep Abyss of Misery? Thou, who deliverest thy Children from the burning Furnace, wilt thou not quench the fury of this Flame that devours me? O Lord, shut up my Lips, and let there come out nothing repugnant to that respect that I owe to thy Divine Majesty. To thee, Great God, belongs Justice, but to me, shame and confusion of face; when thou shouldest cause me to endure a thousand Plagues and Torments more, if this poor Body were able to suffer them; and when thou shouldest cast me irrecoverably into the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone, I should have no cause to complain of thy severity. It is true, my pains are great, but they are nothing in comparison of my sins and offences; my torments are violent, but they are not to be compared with my Saviours bitter sufferings, with that could sweat, and those drops of Blood that fell from his precious Body: My affliction is unmerciful, but it is not to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in them that worship thee, and preserve to the end, in an obedience to thy Holy Will. When thou shouldest kill me, Lord, yet would I hope in thee, for thou afflictest me, that I might not perish for ever with the rest of the World; Thou causest my Body to be destroyed, that my Soul might be saved. Bruise me, Lord, and crush me to pieces, so that I may become some of thy precious Wheat; Cut and burn me in this momentary Life, so that thou wilt be favoura-

ble to me in the life to come. Cause this bitter cup to pass from me, that I may not drink up all its dregs. Nevertheless, O Heavenly Father, not my Will, but thy Will be done. Pluck this Thorn out of my Flesh, or vouchsafe unto me sufficient strength to endure its deadly wounds with patience. O good God, thou knowest that my Spirit is willing, but my Flesh is weak, and that my misery is heavier than the Sand of the Sea-shore; but thou that quickenest the dead wilt accomplish thy Vertue in mine Infirmities; Therefore, instead of speaking in Cain's Language, My punishment is greater than I can bear. I will say with St. Paul, I can do all things in Christ that strengthens me. O Lord, punish me not in thy wrath, nor correct me in thy heavy displeasure, but chastise me in reason, that I may not be reduced to nothing. When thou didst wrestle with Jacob, thou tookest upon thee an Humane Body, and did strengthen thy Servant by the vertue of thy Divine Spirit. O Merciful and Gracious God, let thy punishments be proportionable to my great weaknesses; suffer not any temptation to seize upon me, but only Humane, and give me, with the temptation, an happy issue, that may support it, that neither Death nor Life, nor Pain nor Torment, may ever separate me from thy Love, or pluck me out of thine Hand. Good Lord, forsake me not, that I may never forsake thee; but enable me with Strength, Patience and Constancy, to bear my burden, and make me more than Conqueror, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Merciful God, pity thy servant; or rather thine adopted Child. Awaken thy jealousie, and let thy Bowels that are hardened against me, move thee to compassion; Strengthen me in this encounter with the assistance of the good Angels that comforted thine only Son, in the night of his most bitter affliction; cause this black night of my Sorrows to pass speedily away, or rather in the midst of these dark shadows, cause me to see the ravishing beams of thy Mercy. Heal my grievous wounds, or else poure into them the refreshing Balm of thy most tender and Divine Consolations; my
Heart

Heart and my Flesh fail and faint away, but look upon me with a Gracious Eye, and receive me into the embraces of thine Eternal Mercy. Declare, I beseech thee, how sensible thou art of my affliction, by a present relief; receive my Sweat and Tears, and put them into thy Bottles. O good God, thou seest that I am fainting, and that my Soul is weary within me, comfort me therefore with thy Cordials, and with thy most Divine refreshments; Give me to drink of the Wine of thy most effectual Consolations, that may restore unto me my spirits; apply the right hand of thy Mercy, that it may strengthen my Soul, and drive from thence all poison and infection. Let thine Holy Spirit, the Spiritual Dove light upon me, to bring joy unto me. O living God, thou seest that I dye, but give me some of that living Water, whereof if a man drink he shall live Eternally; my Friends are grieved with me, and weep for my bitter affliction, but can give me no assistance, but thine only look would be able to deliver me. O my God, either pull me out of this Sea of Trouble into which thou hast cast me, or cause me to pass through these waves to the Inheritance prepared for me from the foundation of the World. Quench these violent Flames that burn and consume me, or let them serve as fiery Chariots to carry me in triumph to Heaven. O how mad and senseless should I be if I did fear Death, seeing that it will put an end to my torments, it will break in pieces my Grievous Chains; it will wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes, and banish all grief from my Heart. O my God, when shall all my Cries, my Sighs and Groans be changed into Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving? when shall I see my self in the Glorious company of the Blessed, who are come out of the great tribulation, and who have wash'd and cleansed their Garments in the Blood of the Lamb? Draw me, and I shall run after thee, and Glorify thee for ever in thine Heavenly Temple, Amen.

CHAP. XIV.

The second Consolation against the fears of Death, is to look upon God as a merciful Father, and to trust upon his infinite Goodness.

THere is no Child well discended, but desires earnestly to see his Fathers Face, and especially, the Face of a Good and Gracious Father. A great Princes Son, who hath been brought up in a Forreign Country, rejoyceth at his own Happines, when his Father sends for him, to make him partaker of the Glory and Dignity of his Empire; he is not then grieved nor troubled, he seeks not to delay his going, but rather he embraceth, with transports of joy, the Messenger of such good news; he thinks of nothing but of hasting his departure; if he could borrow wings, he would fly with an unspeakable swiftness to his Fathers Palace. Now we are the Children of the Great God, whose Throne is Heaven, and whose Footstool is the Earth; for our Faith that looks upon Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Redeemer, considers God as our God and Father; for to them who have received this only Son of the Father, hath been granted the previledg of being the Sons of God, to them who beleive in his name, 1 *Joh* 1. So that we have just cause to be transported in an Holy Excess of Joy, with the Apostle St. *John*, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God, 1 *Joh*. 3.

We were by nature Children of Wrath, as others, but God, who is rich in Mercy, hath predestinated us unto the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his Will, *Eph*. 2. He gives us the Gracious assurances of this free adoption,

in

in this life; for as we are Children, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son in our Hearts, to cry *Abba, Father*, *Eph. 1.* This Holy Spirit bears witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God; If we be Children, then Heirs of God, and Co-heirs with Christ, *Gal. 4.* Yea, if we suffer with him, that we may be also Glorified with him, *Rom. 8.* That we might be the Children of God, he hath not only adopted us by Jesus Christ, but also regenerated us by uncorruptible Seed. We are not born of Flesh and of Blood, but we are born of God. His infinite Goodness perswaded him first to grant us a Being, and his incomprehensible love, hath moved him to reform our Beings, and reprint his Divine Image in our Hearts, *John 1. 1 Pet. 1.* He hath begotten us by his pure Grace, by the word of his Truth, that we might be the First Fruits of his Creatures, *Jam. 1.* *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance uncorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us, 1 Pet. 1.*

Now, although we be the Children of God, and the supposed Heirs of his Crown, our Glory and Dignity is not to be discerned during the years of our Earthly Pilgrimage. Our Heavenly Father suffers us here in an Estate contemptible in the eye of the World, that we might learn Humility, and desire more earnestly his celestial Inheritance. As it happens in a dark and obscure midnight, Men tread under feet the Pearls, the Diamonds, the Scepters and the Crowns; Thus it is now, that a gross ignorance hath overspread and covers the face of the World; the Children of God, who are the most precious Jewels of his Crown, are esteem'd no better than the scum, or the filth of the Earth. This consideration causeth *St. John* to tell us, *Beloved, we are now Children of God, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear,*

appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3. As David sent for Absalom out of the Philistines Country, and gave him leave to dwell in the City of Jerusalem; but for the space of two years, he would not suffer him to enter his Royal Palace, or see his Face; Likewise, God hath freed us from the Devils Tyranny, and Hells Power, he hath admitted us into his Holy Church, which is as his Jerusalem, where he gives a fore-tast of our Heavenly Peace and Reconciliation, but he delays for a time our reception into the magnificent Palace of his Glory, and to the enjoyment of his Divine Presence, the highest satisfaction, and the greatest happiness. While we remain in the Body, we are estranged from God, so that we are saved, but by Hope, 2 Cor. 5. But when we shall depart out of this Body, we shall be with the Lord, and shall enter into a real fruition of his Celestial Inheritance, Rom. 8. Finally, while we dwell here below, we may see the Image of our Heavenly Father, and behold his Face as in a Glass; but when he shall have caused us to draw near his Throne, we shall see him face to face, we shall be transformed into his likeness, and be fully satisfied with his resemblance, Rom. 1. 1 Cor. 3. 1 Cor. 13. Psal. 17.

Let Death be never so hideous and ugly, it is the Messenger of our Heavenly Father; and if we can have but the confidence to open its iron hands, and look into them, we shall find Gracious Letters, full of Love, by which this Father of Mercy calls us to the full enjoyment of our Eternal Happiness. Death doth not only invite us to go to God, but it serves as a Vessel to convey us through this tempestuous Sea of the World, to go to our good God, who expects our coming at the Haven of everlasting Rest; it is like to Eliab's Chariot of Fire, that carried him up to Heaven, 2 King. 2. If Death covers our eyes with one hand, and deprives us of the Light of the Sun with the other,

it rents in pieces that Vail which hinders us from the sight of the varieties of God's immortal Sanctuary, and discovers to us the Glorious Face of the Father of Lights; with the one it digs for our Bodies a Grave to cast them in, but with the other hand it flings open, for our Souls, the Gates of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, to usher them into the Banqueting-Hall.

Therefore Death should be so far from frightening us, that its arrival should rather comfort us, and cause us to resolve to follow it with an Holy chearfulness; for we should not only be willing to go to God with transports of joy, when he is pleased to call us to himself, to behold his Face, and to eat of the Bread of Eternal life in his Heavenly Kingdom, but of our own accord, we should be impatient to enjoy his Glorious Presence, and in a continual longing to see that happy day that shall bring us into him, and satisfy us with his unspeakable Delights. A true Christian should be moved in this occasion, with *David's* Spirit, *As the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God. My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?*

I confess that this Great God, before whom we are to appear, is clothed with Glory and Majesty, and dwells in the Light, which no man can approach unto, *1 Tim. 6.* I know that he sits upon a dreadful Throne of Fire, whereof the Wheels are like a burning Flame, *Dan. 7.* that a thousand thousand wait upon him, and ten thousand Millions stand before him, *Isai. 6.* I am not ignorant, that at his Presence the Earth is moved, the Sea and the Rivers dry up, the Mountains tremble, and the little Hills shake, the Rocks decay, the Pillars of Heaven fail, and the Seraphins covers themselves with their wings, *Revel. 4.* But let not this dreadful Majesty and Heavenly Pomp terrify thee, O believing Soul, for this Great God is full of a Fatherly affection for thee. Round about this Throne of God there is a beautiful

beautiful Rainbow of a Green colour, like unto an Emerald, to signify unto us, that God is reconciled, and that the Covenant of our Peace is to continue for ever. As out of this magnificent Throne, proceed the Thunders and Thunderbolts, that fright the Worldlings, and cast the proud Souls down to the ground; so from thence proceed also Lightnings, and such refreshing Flames, as are able to comfort the Believer, and to guide him to his Celestial Inheritance. We are related to God more than the Angels and Seraphims, for we are not only his Creatures and Servants, but also his Children, and the Members of his Son; nay, we are but one with him, *Job* 17. Let us therefore return our hearty thanks to our Heavenly Father, which hath made us mete to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Colos.* 1.

Let us go up with confidence to Mount *Sion*, for there are no signs of God's wrath to be seen, nor of his just vengeance; we shall find no bounds to separate us from God's Gracious Presence, but we shall find Cords of Love to draw us, and unite us unto him; we shall see no fire to devour and scare us, but we shall perceive the comfortable Flames which burn without consuming, and which bring Comfort rather than Fear; we shall not meet there a terrable Law-giver to derive us from him, to scare us with his Thunderbolts; but we shall meet a loving Father to embrace us, and open to us the bosom of his tender compassions. In short, we shall not hear there the terrible sound of the Trumpet, that causeth the Rocks to split asunder, that casts to the ground the proud Cedars, and that makes the Deer cast their young; but we shall hear the sweet and melodious voice, that will settle our trembling Souls, refresh our languishing Hopes, and fill us with Peace and Eternal Comfort, *Heb.* 12.

I acknowledg that God is just, but he is also merciful, and his mercy rejoyceth against Judgement; his
Justice

Justice is like an exceeding high Mountain, but his Mercy may be compared to the bottomless deep, *Psal. 39.* Therefore *Moses* who had seen God more than any living Man, cannot be satisfied to extol and magnify his infinite Mercy and the overflowing Riches of his love, *Psal. 36.* He names him but once, *Just*, but many times he calls him *Merciful*, *Gracious*, *Long-suffering*, *abundant in Goodness and Truth*, *Exod. 4.* It is not unworthy of our observation, that the word *Righteous* or *Just*, attributed to God, doth often signify also *Merciful*, *Gracious*, and *Loving*, in the Holy Tongue. It is true, God holds in his hand the Sword of his Justice, but he is girded, and clothed with his Mercy, as with a Garment. In short, God is not only Good and Merciful, but he is also Goodness and Mercy it self, 1 *John 4.* His compassion and tenderness is far greater than that of the best Fathers or Mothers, as he himself declares by the Prophet, *Can a Woman forget her Sucking-Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her Womb; yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my Hands, yea, in the bottom of my Heart, Isa. 49.* These fatherly Compassions force him to let fall the sword of his justice, as he tells us in *Hosea*, *How shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together, I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, Chap. 11.* Therefore David had good cause to be perswaded, *That when his Father and Mother should forsake him, the Lord would receive him.* When all Love, Kindness, and Mercy were totally banished from the Earth; when all natural affections should be extinct, my God will not forsake me while I live, and at the hour of my death, he will receive me into his bosom, and cover me with his wings. Christian Souls, Let not the sad remembrance of your former sins and miscarriages, discourage you; for when we appear before the Throne of Gods Majesty, we must

must not trust upon our own Righteousness, nor be puffed up with the fancy of our merits, but we must place all our assurance and hope, in the Mercy of God alone; we must imitate *Daniel*, who speaks thus of himself and of his proceedings; *We do not present our supplications before thee for our Righteousnesses, but for thy great Mercies*, Dan. 9. The compassions of God are our Mercies, while God hath store of compassions we shall not want merits, *St. Bern.* Now God's Mercies and Compassions can never fail, they renew every morning, his faithfulness is very excellent, *Lam. 3.* *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live*, Ezek. 33. *I am he, I am he that blots out all thy sins for mine own sake, and will not rememember thy transgressions*, *Isai. 45.* Although our sins and iniquities appear to us with all the deformity and ugliness of Hell, Be not overcome with grief, nor cast your selves into despair; Let us rather say with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our Heart with our Hands unto God in the Heavens.* Or let us speak in the language of *Micah*, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his Heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. He will come again, he will have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast out their sins into the depths of the Sea*, *Micah 7.* Let us comfort our selves with the words of the Prophet *Daniel*, *To the Lord our God belongs Mercies and Forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him*, Dan. 7.

Tell me not again, I know that God is Good and Merciful, but I have offended him too much, to believe that he will vouchsafe me a Pardon, and have Mercy upon me. After many repented Vows, after many
Groans,

Groans, Sighs, and Tears of Repentance. I have returned as the Dog to his Vomit, and as the Swine to wallow in the Mire, 2 Pet. 2. But wretched sinner, learn for thy comfort, that when thy sins should be as many as the Sand of the Sea-shore, or as the Stars if the Sky, Is. 44. If thou dost now sincerely repent of them, with a contrite Soul, God will blot them out as the Cloud, and will cast them into the Sea? for God's Mercy hath no bounds, and his Compassions are infinite, Micah. 7. When thy Brother hath offended thee, if he ask forgiveness, the Lord Commands that thou shouldest pardon him, not only seven times, but seventy and seven times, Matth. 17. How much more reason hast thou to believe, that God, of his infinite Goodness and Mercy, will pardon thee more sins, and oftener? therefore instead of murmuring over thy miscarriages, accept of the precious Balm of his Divine Consolations, and say with the Royal Prophet, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, Bless his Holy Name; Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindnesses and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the Eagles. The Lord executeth Righteousness and Judgement. for all that are not oppressed; the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever; he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities; for as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him, as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Psal. 103.*

Don't answer me, that your sins are so grievous and abominable, that you cannot expect a Pardon; for

when they should be as high as the proudest Mountains, if thou art really sensible of their weight, if they make thee to sigh and groan, God's infinite Mercy, like a Deluge, shall cover and wash them away, *Lam. 5.* or like a Torrent, it shall transport them out of his sight; for when sin abounds, God's Grace will super-abound, in case there be true Repentance, *Isa. 1.* When your sins should be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; when they should be as red as Vermilion, they shall become as white as Wooll. All the offences that you are guilty of since you are in the World, are finite, and limited, but God's Mercy is infinite. *O Lord, if thou shouldest mark iniquities who shall stand? cut there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared, Psal. 130.*

He that hides his transgressions shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall obtain Mercy, *Prov. 18.* It is certain that there is no sinner never so guilty, that shall seek unto God's Mercy, by a true Repentance, but shall obtain his request, *Psal. 113.* *David* had defiled himself with an horrible Adultery, and imbued his Hands in the Blood of one of his most faithful Servants; but as soon as he had made his Suit unto God, with a broken Heart, and a contrite Spirit, this good and merciful Creator cleansed this foul Sinner from all his guilt, at the fountain of his infinite Mercy; he made him whiter than Snow, and comforted his bruised Bones. This Consideration caused him to cry out, *I said I will confess unto God my transgressions, and thou O God, hast taken away the punishment of my sin, Psal. 52.* King *Manasseh* had been addicted to devilish Arts, and to the most abominable and grievous Idolatries, *2 Cron. 33.* Nevertheless, as soon as he sighs in his Chains, his Prayers and his Groans found a Gracious reception at the Throne of Grace. The poor Publican in the Gospel being ashamed to lift up his Eyes to Heaven, struck upon his Breast with this expression of his penitent Soul, *O God be merciful to me a sinner, Luk. 18.*

And

And God look'd upon him with an Eye of Mercy, and stretched out unto him his Gracious Hand, so that he departed to his home justified. The penitent *Magdalen* was inwardly grieved at her former filthy and debauched behaviour, so that she came and cast her self at our Saviours Feet, watering them with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head, *Luk* 9. but Christ soon lifted her up with these comfortable words, *Thy sins are pardoned, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.* St. Peter by an unconstancy, that should cause the best Christians to tremble for fear of falling into the same Apostacy, denied his Lord and Master three times, with cursing and swearing, *Matth.* 26. but this merciful God looked upon him with an eye of compassion, and gave him grace to repent most bitterly of such a foul crime. I doubt not, but at the the same time, that this wretched sinner poured forth his Tears in God's presence; doubtless, he poured into his Heart the Oyl of Joy and Gladness, and comforted him most effectually by his Divine Spirit. Likewise, although your sins be grievous and abominable, if your Souls be struck with grief and displeasure, if your Hearts be truly penitent, so that you shed sincere Tears of Repentance; and in case you are heartily sorry for the want of a sufficient displeasure for your sins, in case you prostrate your self before your Heavenly Father, he will raise you up again by his infinite Goodness, he will cast all your sins and transgressions behind him; he will cry unto you in your Hearts. by the voice of his Holy Spirit, *My Son* or *My Daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee,* *John* 5. He will fill your Souls with an unspeakable Joy, *Luk* 9. and will cause you to sing with the *Psalmist*; *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile,* *Psal* 32. Finally, think not that it is ever too late to repent, and that when Death is upon your Lips it is no time to

seek to the Mercy of God. As the business of Repentance cannot be too soon, because we know not when God shall call us to himself; It is most certain, that it can never be too late; for at what time or season soever the poor sinner melts into Tears of Repentance, in case his Repentance be real, and his Tears proceed from a patient heart, God will always have the Arms of his Mercy wide open to receive him. The Thief crucified at our Saviours side, was at last gasp, when he was converted, and when he uttered this excellent expression; *Remember me Lord, when thou comest into thy Kingdom*, Luk. 23. Our good and merciful Saviour, granted his Request, and encouraged him with the most excellent and comfortable promise that we can imagin; *Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. In like manner, when thou art at the point of death, if God speaks unto thee, and awakens thy Conscience it is an infallible sign, that he hath compassion upon thee, and that he will not destroy thee. It is a sign that he opens for thee his Heaven, full of Light and Glory, and offers unto thee his Paradise, with all its Divine Excellencies. Doubt not, penitent sinner, that this is the acceptable day, the day of Salvation, and the time of God's good pleasure, seeing that this good God draws so near thee, thou mayest with freedom draw near him. And seeing that he beats and knocks at the door of thine Heart, it is an infallible token, that thou mayest also beat at the door of his Eternal Mercies, and that he intends to open to satisfy thee. In short, at what hour soever we go unto God, and appear before his Throne, he stretcheth out unto us the Golden Scepter of his Goodness, that we should obtain Mercy, and find Grace, to be helped in time of need.

It is not needful that we should prepare long and elaborated Speeches or Prayers, to perswade God to vouchsafe his Grace and needful help, in such an urgent necessity. It is not necessary that we should compose them,
with

with the Art and Industry of humane Wisdom. We need but pray unto God, as unto our Father, and weep in his besom; we need but open unto him our Hearts, and call our selves his Children; that alone, is sufficient to move him to compassion, and to stir up his Fatherly affections, to appease his anger, and to draw upon us his most excellent Blessing. The Prophet *Isaiab*, the most Eloquent of the Men of his time, seeks no other argument to perswade God to have Mercy and Compassion, butt his, *Look down from Heaven, and behold from the Habitation of thy Holiness, and of thy Glory; where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, the sounding of thy Bowels, and of thy Mercies towards me? are they restrained? doubtless, thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from everlasting, Isai. 63.* Likewise, after that he had made this confession, *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy Rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away, and there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee, for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities,* Chap. 64. He Adds, *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, we are thy Clay, and thou art our Potter, and we all are the work of thine Hand; Be not wrath very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever; behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy People.*

By this gracious and loving Title of Father; the prodigal Son is perswaded to be able to oblige his Father to have compassion of him; *I will rise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants.* Thus, although we have forsaken our Heavenly Father, mispent the Riches of his Grace, and lived a filthy and a prophane Life; Nevertheless, if we can be but

moved with a serious and a true repentance, and say to him from our hearts, *Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee, I am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* He will^d forget all the miscarriages of our youth, and will pass by all the offences that we have committed out of ignorance or mistake; nay, he will blot out all our wilful and deliberate sins; he will not only embrace us when we shall cast our selves at his feet and in the arms of his Mercy; but he will meet and receive us as his dearest Children: he will kiss us with the blessed kisses of his Fatherly love; he will give unto us his Holy Spirit, that shall seal us for the day of Redemption, and shall assure us, that we are admitted to the liberty and all the priviledges of his Children; he will shooe our Feet with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, and will give us all the assurance of our entire and perfect reconciliation. He will cloath us here upon Earth with Robes of Righteousness and Holiness, and in Heaven he will bestow upon us uncorruptible Robes of immortality and Glory. In this life he will give us the foretasts of Eternal Happiness, and in the life to come he will lead us by the hand into the Banqueting Chamber, and will cause us to sit there at Table with *Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob*, and with all the first-born whose names are written in Heaven. Out of this celestial abode, all murmurings and complaints shall be banished, but here shall be rejoycing and gladness for the conversion of poor sinners, and for their admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven. God himself shall invite the Holy Angels and blessed Spirits to share in these publick rejoycings: saying to them, *We must rejoyce, for these my Children were dead, but now they are alive; they were lost, but now they are found again.*

Let the miserable slaves of the Devil, and of their filthy Lusts, tremble at the approaches of death, and let them look upon God as a dreadful Judge, *Rom. 2.*

For

For our parts, we have not the spirit of Bondage to be again in fear ; but we have the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we may cry *Abba, Father*. Let the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, who have no other Being nor Life, but that which they have received with their corrupted Nature, fly from God's Presence ; for our parts, we that are Regenerated by the Spirit of the second *Adam*, we will draw near to him with boldness. We will not say as that wretched Soul, disturbed and frightened at the consideration of its crimes, *I heard thy voice, I was afraid and hid my self*, Gen. 3. But rather, having been brought up in the Schools of the Prophets and Apostles, and having learn'd that we must prefer our Obedience to God's Will, to all other things whatsoever ; we shall say unto him with *Samuel*, *Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth*, 1 Sam. 8. Or rather, we will speak unto him in plainer terms ; O my God and Heavenly Father, speak when thou wilt, for thy servant is ready, and resolved to obey thy Commands ; we will stay till God shall call the fourth time, as that Holy Man, *Numb. 31*. who because of his tender and unexperienced years, could not distinguish between God's voice, and that of a Man ; but we will have our Ears always open to his Divine Orders, and at the first motion and summons of his Will, we shall be ready to follow him, as the Children of *Israel* were in the Wilderness, when they raised their Camp, and marched according to God's directions, *Numb. 3*.

And as when the *Levites* stopt, and put down the Ark in its own place, 2 *Chron. 3*. *Moses* did commonly pray, *O Lord give rest to the thousands of Israel*. Likewise, you believing Souls, whom God hath chosen for his Ark and Temple, as soon as you shall perceive that this wise Governor of Mankind intends to put a period to your painful Journey and laborious Race ; that is to say, as soon as you shall perceive the least sign of death, speak with an Holy confidence and joy ; Re-

joyce, O my Soul, the time of thy freedom, and of thine Eternal Rest approacheth; Here is the Messenger of good news; here is Death that will usher me into the Glorious Palace of my Heavenly Father. *Father*, the hour is come, Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may Glorify thee, *John* 17.

When the hour was come that our Lord *Jesus Christ* was to go out of this World to the Father; he said unto his Disciples who were grieved for his going from them, *If ye loved me ye would rejoyce, because I said, I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I, John* 13. *John* 14. Christian Souls, speak in this maner at the hour of your departing. If such as are about you happen to weep and lament, if they endeavour to move and stop you, by the considerations of Flesh and Blood, tell them, why are you grieved at my deliverance, and at the end of my misery? why would ye hinder and retard my Glory and Happiness? O how cruel is your Love? how blind and unconsiderate is your Affection? Certainly, if ye did love me as ye ought, ye would prefer my satisfaction, and the accomplishment of my happiness, to the small advantages that ye might gather from my abode with you; ye shall consider, that the least part of the joy that I shall feel in my Heavenly Father's House, is a thousand times more worth than all the Pleasures of the Earth, than the Honours of the Age, and the Pomp and Glory of the World. My friends, or rather my enemies, let me go, for I go to my Father, I go to behold his Face which is the most Divine satisfaction; I go to take possession of that Inheritance prepared for me from the foundations of the World, *John* 20. *Matth.* 21.

A Prayer and Meditation for a believing Soul,
that strengthens it self against the fears
of Death, by an assurance, and
Trust upon God's Fatherly
Goodness and Infi-
nite Mercy.

MY God and Creator, I perceive that the time of my departure draweth near, and that Death presseth sore upon me. It summons me to appear before thy dreadful Tribunal; it frights me, when it brings to my remembrance all my former sins, and represents unto me the bairnousness of my crimes. O great God, when I seriously think upon what I am, and consider what thou art, I am astonished, and the sight of thy Divine Majesty frights me, for I am but Dust and Ashes, and my Being is less than nothing; but thou art infinite in thy Being and Glory; the Heaven is thy Throne, and the Earth is thy Footstool: I am cloathed with darkness, but thou dwellest in a light that no man can approach unto. How dare I, that am but conceived with sin, draw near unto thee, who art the Holy of Holies, and Holiness it self. How can I, that am but dry Straw and Stubble, stand before an everlasting burning. O God of Gods, if I did see thee sitting upon the Throne of thy Glory, as Judge of thousand thousands of immortal Spirits wait upon thee, and ten thousand Millions worship thee; if I did see thee armed with Thunderbolts, encompassed with Flames of Fire, like to those of Mount Sinai: I should not be only afraid, but I should fall into despair. Instead of drawing near to thee, I should fly from thee, as Adam, and endeavour to hide my self from thine Eyes that cannot suffer the sight of evil; I should cry out as Moses, I am afraid, and I tremble all over. Or, as the Prophet Isaiah, Woe is me, for I am undone, because

because I am a man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the midst of a People of unclean Lips, *Isai. 6.* Or, it may be I may say with the Holy Apostle, Depart from me, for I am a sinful Creature. But good God, I see that thy Throne, so full of Glory, is encompassed about with a Rainbow of an immortal and a refreshing Colour. I see in it the undoubted assurances of my Peace and Eternal Reconciliation with thee, therefore I dare go to it with confidence, as to the Throne of Grace, to obtain Mercy, and find Grace, to be helped in time of need. Although thou art Cloathed with Majesty, and Crowned with Glory, thou dost stretch out unto me the Golden Scepter of thine infinite Mercies. I see that thou hast put on the Arms of thy Justice and Vengeance, to put on the Bowels of Love and Compassion. I hear no more over my Head, the dreadful Thunder of thy Curses, but I hear the still voice of thy Mercy, that comforts my trembling Soul, that raiseth up my drooping Spirit, and that causeth me to conceive the assured hopes of Happiness and Glory in thine Heavenly Paradise. I see no more about thee the grievous flames and burnings to devour sinful Men; but I perceive the pleasant and refreshing flames of thy Love, that rejoyce and Comfort me, and that do not destroy me as they did the two Captains and Soldiers of Ahaziah, but they carry me up to Heaven as the Prophet Elijah was. The Spirit which thou hast given me, is not the Spirit of Bondage, to incline me to fear, but the spirit of Adoption, whereby I cry Abba, Father. It is this spirit that witnesseth with my spirit, that I am thy Child, thy Heir, and Co-heir with thy Holy Son Jesus. Seeing thou hast reconciled me to thy self by the Blood of thy Beloved Son, when I was a Slave of Satan, and thy sworn Enemy; now that I am so nearly related to thee, wouldest thou refuse me mine inheritance? O my God, my Heavenly Father, I know that I have grievously offended thee, and that if thou didst treat me exactly according to thy Justice, of a thousand Articles, I could not answer one; therefore I should have cause to expect to be cast into the

Eternal

Eternal Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; but Lord thou dost not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn to thee and live. Moreover, thou hast confirmed this with an oath, and thou wilt never break it. I confess that my sins are many, and that their heinousness appears unto me day and night; but Lord, where sin abounds, thy Grace, or thy Mercy superabounds: and when mine iniquities should be as red as Vermilion, thou hast promised to render them as white as Snow; Thou shalt be moved for me with the same compassion as a Father is moved for his Child, and thou wilt put away from thee all mine offences as far as the East is from the West. O my Soul, why art thou afflicted? why dost thou fret within me? return to thy Rest, my Soul, for the Lord hath done thee good; he prepares for thee an Eternal Felicity. It is not Death's voice that I hear, but the Call of mine Heavenly Father, who invites and commands me to come away to him: Therefore, though I am a most miserable sinner, I am going to cast my self at thy feet, and to say to thee as the prodigal Child, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. O my God, and Father, thou hast bestowed upon me thy most Divine Favours, thy greatest Riches and Blessings; nevertheless, I have been estranged from thee, and have unhappily abused all thy Mercies. I have too much given my self over to the debaucheries of the Flesh and of the World; evil company hath corrupted my behaviour; so that from the sole of the Foot, to the Crown of the Head, there is nothing whole in me; in this miserable Estate, I fly to thee my Judge for Mercy, or rather, I implore and intreat with all my Heart thy Fatherly Love, to have compassion of me O Divine Flames, O Abyss of Charity, O God, whose tenderness for me is far greater than that of the best Fathers, and of the most tenderhearted Mothers for their Babes; I see thy Bowels move for me, thy compassions kindle, and thy Arms wide open to receive me; thou art not only ready to embrace me, but thou meetest me in the way; not
only

Only as the Father of the Prodigal Son, thou dost not only receive me, but thou hast sought me out in my former abode of corruption, and drawn me out of those depths of Misery. O unparell'd Love! what may not I expect from thy Fatherly kindness? thou shalt embrace me with the Arms of thy Mercy, and kiss me with the kisses of thy Love; thou shalt confirm my assurance, of being admitted into the liberty of thy Children, and give unto me a white Stone, where thou shalt write the new Name of Elect, or Believer, that none knows but him that hath it. Thou wilt shooe my Feet with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace; of rather, thou shalt give unto my Soul, that peace of God that passeth all understanding. Thou shalt put upon me the Robes of fine and white Linnen, which are the Righteousness of the Saints, and thou shalt cloath me with the Rayes of the Sun of Justice. Thou shalt lead me into thy Dwelling, I mean, thy Glorious Palace, where, instead of killing the fatted Calf, we shall solemnize the Nuptials of the Lamb, offered from the foundation of the World, there we shall meet with the Angels; the immortal Spirits, and all the First-born, whose names are written in Heaven, who shall not murmur nor complain, but shall be transported with joy, and adore that infinite Goodness which thou hast declared to us poor and miserable sinners, who cut of thine incomprehensible Love, hast made us thy Children, and Heirs of thy Kingdom, O Goodness, worthy of the admiration of Heaven and Earth, we were all lost, but we shall be all found in God, we were dead, but by death, we shall return to life; we were over-whelmed in a grievous misery, but by this means we shall attain to the greatest happiness. O my God, I recommend unto thee my Soul, as to a faithful Creator; Heavenly Father, my Spirit I leave in thy Hands, Amen.

CHAP. XV.

*The third Consolation against the fears of Death,
is to represent continually unto our selves,
the Death and Sufferings of our Lord
Jesus Christ, and to trust upon
the merits of his Cross.*

IF we will dye with a peacable and quiet mind, we must always represent to our selves the death and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and rely upon the merits of his Cross; for the Death of this Prince of Life should be the Model of ours, and the bottomless Fountain of Comforts to a believing Soul.

1. By looking upon this perfect example, the wonder of Men and Angels, we learn to endure with an Holy resolution and patience all the evils and pangs that accompany Death, *Luk 22*. For although our Saviours Torments were most bitter, so that his Soul was sorrowful unto Death, although there issued out of his innocent Body, a bloody Sweat for the violence of his pain; nevertheless, none ever heard the least murmuring, or expression of impatience, *Isai. 53*. He was led to the slaughter as a Lamb, and as a Sheep before the Shearer, is dumb.

2. From hence we learn, that the last hours of our life, must be employed in fervent and continual Prayers unto God, seeing, that this Beloved of the Father, offers unto him at such a time his Prayers and Supplications, with great Cries, and a flood of Tears, as to him who was able to deliver him from Death, *Heb. 5*. In the bosom of this Heavenly Father, he poureth out all his Grievs, and three times he presents this request, *Father, if it be possible that this cup should pass away from me, except I drink it, Matth. 26*.

3. We

3. We learn to present our selves before Gods Divine Majesty with Humility, and to resign our selves wholly to his wonderful Providence; seeing that he who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, he whom the millions of Angels and Seraphins worship continually, thought it no disgrace to himself to fall upon his knees three times to the ground, and submit his Will to that of his Heavenly Father; for after that he had said, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me, except I drink it.* He adds these words, *Nevertheless, O Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt,* Matth. 26.

4. If at the time of our death, an excessive sorrow, or a malignant humour seize upon our minds, so that in that disposition we are not able to see the Heavens open, nor God who stretcheth out his Arm to receive us into his Rest; Let us remember that this merciful Lord speaks to us as he did to his three Apostles who fell asleep when he was in his Agony, *Cannot you watch one hour with me?* Mat. 29. My dear Children, it is no time to fall asleep with the foolish and inconsiderate Virgins, trim your Lamps, put on the Garments of Light, to meet your Celestial Bridegroom, and to enter with him into the Marriage Chamber, Matth. 25.

5. God requires that we should do as much good at all times to our friends as we are able, and to express the sincerity of our affections to those with whom Nature and our Duty have caused us to be related; but especially at the hour of death, we are more bound to this Religious Duty; therefore Jesus Christ hath shewn us an excellent example, for when he was nailed to the Cross, and ready to breath forth his Soul into the hands of his Heavenly Father, he had an especial care of his Holy and Blessed Mother, saying to his beloved Disciple, *My Son, behold thy Mother,* and to her, *Woman, behold thy Son.*

6. We must not only do good, and shew kindness to our friends, but we must forgive our greatest enemies, such also as employ their greatest fury against us; for by
this

this means we shall follow the Blessed footsteps of our Gracious Saviour, for he had compassion upon them that crucified him and mocked him; *Father*, said he, *forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

7. By the Cross of Jesus Christ, we learn to put our trust in the goodness of God in our greatest pangs, and to embrace him as our most loving Father and Redeemer, when he seems to discover to us a severe countenance, full of wrath and displeasure; for this Eternal Son of God, in his most violent tortures, when his Heavenly Father did suspend his aid and assistance, and withheld the effects of his Grace, the expressions of his Love, and the comforts of his Divine Spirit; nevertheless, he looks upon him as his God, and reposes himself upon him; he prays unto him with an Holy assurance, and repeats these passionate words, *My God, my God!*

8. If we will dye willingly, and leave these crazy Bodies with a joyful mind, when the time is come, that we must go to the Father of Spirits, we must remember with what resolution our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ prepar'd himself for death, and how willingly he commanded his innocent Soul into the hands of God his Father, when he required it; *No man taketh my life away from me, but I lay it down of my self, I have Power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this Commandment have I received of my Father, John 10. Heb. 10.* This caused him to speak in this manner, *Here am I, O God, to do thy will, Luk. 23.* Therefore, when he gave up the Ghost, he cried with a loud voice, to shew that his precious Soul was not taken from him by violence, but that he did willingly offer it up as a Sacrifice to God.

9. In this rich description of Christ crucified, we may further learn what should be our last words, and last thoughts; for if God vouchsafes to us the use of our Tongues until the last gasp, we cannot end our life more comfortably, than by such expressions as our Saviour made use of upon the Cross; *Father, into thy hands*

I com-

I commend my Spirit. But if we cannot move our Lips, and that we cannot pronounce these words, we must inwardly meditate upon them in our minds, and express them with motions of the Heart.

10. When we look more narrowly into the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, we may easily find how much we are bound to give up our souls unto God when he is pleased to call for them; for this Blessed death is the price and ransom that he hath paid for them; now, if there be any ransom to render unto every one that which hath been dearly bought, and purchased with a great price; and seeing that would be a great sin to refuse unto any man, that which he hath paid for, with the Blood of his only and beloved Son, how can we refuse our Souls unto God, seeing that they belong to him? because he hath not only created them and stamped in them his Image, but he hath also purchased them with the Blood of his only Son, in whom, from all Eternity he is well pleased. We must not therefore imitate the example of naughty paymasters, or unjust possessors of other Men's Goods, we must not expect until our Souls be plucked from us by violence, but rather like the good and righteous Debtors, we must return them willingly, and yield them up into his hands who hath paid for them an infinite and an unvaluable Ransome. *David* was of this mind, when he said, *Into thine hand I commit my spirit, thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth*, Psal. 31.

11. In this Death and Passion of our Glorious Redeemer, we learn not only our Duty, but also sufficient grounds of comfort and hope; and if I may so say, it is in the Bowels of this dead Lion, that we find the sweetest and most ravishing Consolations; this Chief Priest, that bears us upon his Breast, in his Heavenly Sanctuary, or rather upon his Heart, will not forsake us in the day of our distress, and will not give us over to the fears and pangs of death; for seeing that he hath
encountred

encountred with this cruel Death, seeing that it hath felt its sting, its shiverings and pains, and that he hath been tempted as we have been in all things, except in sin; he is merciful and faithful, to have compassion of our infirmities; he is no less able to assist us in our temptations, and to make us in all things more than Conquerors.

12. Believing Souls, consider with me the noble expressions of *St. Paul*, *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of God*, 2 Cor. 1. These excellent Truths may be very well applied to our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Ghost names, *The Apostle and High Priest of our Profession*, Heb. 3. For the comfortable assistances which he hath received from God, in the time of his greatest anguish, are precious tokens, and infallible assurances of God's suter help in our need; for as, when he was in his bitter Agony, when his Soul was cast down with deadly sorrow, an Angel from Heaven comes to comfort him. Likewise, when we shall be engaged in an encounter with Death, when it shall endeavour to fill our Souls with sadness and apprehensions, he will, doubtless, send unto us some of his good Augels, that be at his right hand, I mean the faithful Teachers of his Holy Word, or else he will send from Heaven some of his blessed Spirits that stand about his Throne, and that are commonly employed in the preservation of the Godly. The Holy Ghost himself, the Comforter of afflicted Souls, and the true Oil of Gladness, will then drive from our hearts all grief, and refresh us with his Heavenly Comforts. He will not forsake us, until he hath brought us to the Head Spring of Eternal Joy and Comfort.

13. Our Lord and Saviours deliverance from Death, is an Image, and an assurance of our future deliverance which we are to expect from God's Mercy, and Almighty

ty Power; for as, when *St. Paul* saith, that this High Priest in the days of his Flesh, offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from Death, *And was heard, in that he feared.* We are not to understand, that he was freed altogether from death, but rather, that he had the favour granted to him of swallowing Death up into Victory, and of triumphing over the Powers of Hell; and that through the shame and bitterness of death, he is gone into his Glory, and into the Joys of his Heavenly Paradise. Likewise when we pray unto God in our greatest distresses, and deepest sorrows, when we pour into his bosom the Tears of a sincere Repentance; he hears us from his Sanctuary, and delivers us from Death, not by hindring us from dying, but by raising our Souls to pass through Death into an immortal Life; from this valley of Tears, into Happiness and endless Bliss.

14. If we will be fully perswaded that God will not withhold from us the Joys and Comforts of his Holy Spirit, and that he will make us more than Conquerors of Death, by admitting us into an Eternal Felicity; we need but cast our eyes upon our Lord Jesus Christ; for as he who bestows much will not refuse a little; so God who hath not spared his only Son, but hath delivered him, for us all, to an ignominious and cruel Death, how shall not he with him freely give us all things? *St. Paul* hath taught to argue in this manner, and to gather this consequence, necessary from God's proceedings, *Rom. 8.*

15. When Christ our Lord gave up the Ghost upon the Cross, the vail of the Temple was rent from the top to the bottom; Heaven was opened, and a repenting Thief was admitted. All this happened, to teach us, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies, by the Blood of Jesus, by the new and living way, which he hath consecrated, by the Vail, which is by his Flesh; and that this merciful Lord hath always his Arms wide open to receive us, and that he will never refuse the Glory of Heaven

Heaven, and the delights of his Paradise, to the greatest sinners that repent, and that seek to his Eternal Mercy, by his infinite Merits.

16. The Death of this great God and Saviour, is the payment of all our debts, and the expiation of all our crimes; it is the healing of all our diseases, the freedom from all our miseries; for it hath overcome Satan and the powers of Hell: It is the death of an Eternal Death, it is this meritorious death that hath purchased for us Heaven and all its Excellencies, and procured to us a Right to God's Paradise, and to its Delights and Pleasures. In short, it is this Death that conveys Paradise into our Souls before we enter into Paradise, and fills our minds with an Heavenly and Divine Peace, and an unspeakable and glorious Joy.

17. This Cross of our Saviour may be compared to the Wood which *Moses* cast into the Waters of *Marah*; for it takes away from the natural Death of God's Children whatsoever is incommodious and bitter, and causeth us to relish Sweetness and Comforts that cannot be express'd; It is like the Salt which the Prophet *Elisha* cast into the Waters of *Jerico*, to make them wholesome and fruitful; for it causeth that death it self proves our Salvation, and brings unto us unspeakable comforts. I may also liken it to the Meal which the same Prophet cast into the Pot, of which the Sons of the Prophets had made this complaint, *O thou man of God, there is death in the pot.* It is the death of Death, because it removes from it all deadly poison, and causeth us to relish Angelical satisfactions. I may therefore justly say of this Glorious Cross, that it is *The Tree of Knowledg of good and evil*; because it makes known, and understood the dreadful evils from which we are delivered, and the infinite advantages which are procured to us by Christ's death. I may call it also the *Tree of Life*; for every one that takes of the Fruit of this Tree with the hand of Faith, and he that eats of it shall live for ever, *John 6.*

Believing Souls, it is that Mystical Ladder which *Jacob* saw in a vision, for it unites Heaven and Earth, sinfu Man with his God, *Gen.* 28. It pleased the Father to make peace by the Blood of the Cross, of his Son, and to reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven, *Coloss.* 1. It is by the means of this Blessed Cross, that the good Angels are sent to our assistance, and that all the Graces and Blessings of God are procured unto us; by this Cross we shall ascend up to God and to his Eternal Happiness; under the shadow of this Divine Cross our Souls doth rest, and enjoy the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding. It is like the Golden Scepter which King *Abasuerus* stretched out unto *Esther*; for if we touch this precious Cross with the hand of Faith, if we embrace it with a contrite Soul, we shall obtain from the King of Kings, not only the half part, but all his Kingdom, with all its Delights, Honours and Advantages.

18. *Moses's* Rod was chang'd into a Serpent, as well as the Rods of *Pharoah's* Magicians; but this Serpent devoured all the rest. Thus the death of our Lord and Saviour is accompanied with Sorrow, Fear and Anguish, but these fears swallow up all other fears, and cause us to draw near with confidence to the Throne of Grace; his Sorrows drive away all our Grievs, and fill us with Joy and Eternal Comfort: his Anguish gives ease and satisfaction to our Souls; his troubled Mind is the cause of the settlement of our Consciences; his drops of Blood do wash down our Tears; his Groans hinder us from Sighing; and his grievous crying doth cause us to sing with Joy: The Fetters of this Glorious Redeemer have purchased our Freedom; and his Condemnation, our Absolution; he hath been content to drink Vinegar mingled with Gall, and to swallow the very dregs of the Cup of God's Wrath and Justice, that he might cause us to drink of the Rivers of his Divine Pleasures. He cried

ed out into the violence of his Grief, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matth. 27. That God might never forsake us, and that in our Greatest troubles, we might have always his fatherly assistance ready at hand; he hath stooped his Head to raise our hopes. In short, he is dead, that he might deliver them, who through fear of Death, were all there life time subject, to a cruel and unsufferable Bondage, *Heb. 2.* So that all such as tremble and are afraid at the approaches of Death, have not yet felt the power and efficacy of the Cross of our Lord Jesus. They trample under feet the Blood of the Son of God, and as much as in them lies, they render the fruits and efficacy of this blessed Death of no effect.

19. Consider well, Christian Souls, and imprint into your minds this Lesson; Remember that Death is never to be feared, but when it proceeds from God's wrath, and the curse of his Law; and when our sins and offences have supplied it with offensive weapons, when the Devil, who seeks to devour us as a roaring Lion, follows Death at the heels; and when, at the same time, Hell opens its infernal jaws to swallow us up: But those who have placed their Faith and Hope in the Death and Passion of the Saviour of the World, and who embrace his Cross, are exempted from all its fears, and out of the reach of all its poisonous Darts.

20. My beloved Souls, be not therefore frightened to see the face of the great Judge of the World, *1 Tim. 2.* Seeing that there is such an excellent Mediator between God and Man, namely the Man, *Christ Jesus*, who hath given himself a Ransom for all, *Rom. 3.* He hath disarmed God's Eternal Justice, and stopt the proceedings of his Vengeance, for God hath appointed him for all Eternity, to be a Propitiation by Faith in his Blood, *John 5.* The Father judges no man, but hath given all Judgement to the Son, as he is the Son of Man. There is now no condemnation to them that are in Jesus Christ;

whosoever believes in him, shall never come into condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life, *Rom. 8. John 5.*

21. Fear no more the Thunderbolts, and the flashes of Fire of Mount *Sinai*; neither do you tremble when you hear its horrible Thunder, *Cursed is every one, who continues not in all things written in the Book of the Law, to do them, Deut. 28.* For although Christ's Hands be nailed and fastened to the Wood, they pluck, nevertheless, out of the Hands of God's Justice, his terrible Thunderbolts, and the Sword of his Vengeance. The precious Blood that runs down from the wounds of this Divine Redeemer, do quench the scorching heat of his Eternal burning. As at the morning of our Saviours Passion, he had a care of his Disciples, and therefore he desired those that came to take him, *If you seek me, let these go, John 18.* Likewise he hath now a care of all such as believe in his name, to secure them under the shadow of his Cross. He takes their place, and for them he stands before God's Justice, saying, Seeing that you have taken me to be their pledge, and that you have pursued me without Mercy; seeing that I have sufficiently satisfied for all their crimes, and have tasted for them the most bitter and cruel death; suffer them to enjoy the freedom that hath been purchased at such a dear rate. Suffer them to pass through death, into the enjoyment of a blessed Life, which is the price of my Blood, and the fruit of my Victories. This merciful Redeemer hath put himself, of his own accord, in our stead, and hath endured, in his own Person, all the pains which were due to our sins; he hath been struck with *Moses's* Rod, and pierced through with the Darts of the Law; he hath been made a Curse for us, for it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a Tree, Gal. 5.* But we are not only by his means redeemed from the Curse of the Law, but we are also blessed in him, with all manner of Heavenly Blessings,

Blessings; when we were without Christ, we were Aliens from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, having no Hope, and without God in the World; But we, who were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ; we have access with confidence by Faith in his precious Blood, so that we may go with boldness to the Throne of Grace, to find mercy and help in time of need, *Heb. 4.* Rejoyce therefore Christian Souls, for you are not come to the Mount that might be touch'd with hands, nor to a burning Fire, nor unto Blackness and Darkness and Tempest, and the sound of a Trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice, they that heard, intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; but ye are come unto mount *Sion*, and unto the City of the living God, the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born which are written in Heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of *Abel*. For *Abels* Blood called for vengeance against his own Brother, *Heb. 12. Col. 1.* but the Blood of Christ pleads for Mercy, Pardon, and Forgiveness for them who were his enemies in their understandings and wicked deeds. And if when we were enemies, we have been reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, *Rom. 5.* How much more now, that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life and intercession?

22. Never fear, neither the Devil nor all the powers of Hell, for according to God's ancient promise, *The seed of the Woman shall bruse the Serpents head*, *Gen. 3.* The Lord of Glory hath spoiled the Principalities and Powers, he hath made a shew of them, openly triumphing over them in his Cross, *Colos. 2.* By his death, he hath destroyed him who had the Empire of death, that is the Devil, so that he hath crush't to pieces

this red Dragon that did devour whole Nations and People, *Heb. 2. Rev. 12.* As it happened when the Children of *Israel* did look to the brazen Serpent, which *Moses* set up in the wilderness, they were perfectly cured of the bitings of the fiery Serpents; Likwise, you wretched sinners who feel the venomous and deadly wounds of the old Serpent, cast the eyes of your faith upon Jesus Christ crucified, and you shall be saved from death, *John 3.* As when the Angel destroyed the First-born of *Egypt*, he had not the Power to meddle with the Children of *Israel*, who had sprinkled their doors with the blood of the Paschal Lamb; so the Devil, who destroys the Children of this world, hath no power to touch those whose Hearts and Consciences are washed in the Blood of the spotless Lamb. And as *Pharaoh* and all the Egyptians that followed him were overwhelmed and drowned in the waters of the Red-Sea, *Heb. 10.* which served as a passage to the Children of *Israel*, to there promised Land. Thus Satan and all his wicked Spirits are as it were swallowed up in this precious Sea of Christs Blood, which opens unto us a way to the celestial *Canaan.* Rejoyce you Heavens, and you that dwell in them, for the accuser of our Brethren is cut off, who accused them day and night before God, but they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb. *1 Pet. 1. Jam. 5.* Christian Souls, resist the Devil and he will fly from you; If he goes about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour, be not troubled at his fury, nor at his infernal power, for he is tied to a Chain that he cannot stretch nor break; He hath been overcome by the Lion of the Tribe of *Juda.* Take therefore the shield of Faith, that you may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil, *Rev. 6.* and speak to him with an undaunted Soul, Get thee behind me Satan, for thou hast no part in me, I belong to the Lord Jesus who hath paid my ransom, who hath redeemed me with his Blood, and sealed me
with

with his Spirit. The Gates of Hell have no power upon those that are built upon the Rock of Eternity, *Matth. 16.*

23. Let not your sins cast you into the Abyſs of deſpair, nor drive you from the Anchor of your Hope; for God hath ſo loved the World, that he hath given his only Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life; they that are whole have no need of ths Phyſitian, but they that are ſick, *John 3.* Our Saviour is not come to call the Juſt to Repentance; ſuch as are puſt up with a vain conceit of their own Righteouſneſs; but ſinners, who acknoledg their faults and are ſorry for them. The ſacred Arms of your Redeemer that were ſtretched wide open upon the Croſs, are yet ſtretched wide open to receive us; and from the higheſt Heavens where he dwells, he cauſeth theſe comfortable words to be heard, *Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt, Matth. 11.* This merciful Lord is come to ſeek for the loſt Sheep, to ſave ſuch as were periſhed, and to redeem his people from their ſins. As by one Man Sin came into the World, and by Sin Death; thus Death is come upon all Men, for they have all ſinned; Likewise by the obedience of one, we are become conquerors over death, *Rom. 5.* and we have obtained the gift of Righteouſneſs and Immortality; it is the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the World, and that hath made an atonement for all our iniquities, *John 1.* For as the Ram that was caught by the Horns in a Thicket was offered up unto God as a burnt-offering, inſtead of *Iſaac, Eph. 5.* Thus the true Lamb of God hath been offered up unto God upon the Croſs for us as a Burnt-Sacrifice, well-pleaſing unto him; he hath born our iniquities in his Body upon the Tree, and by his ſtripes we are healed, *Iſai. 53.* He hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows, the chaſtiſements of our peace was upon him. As *Aaron* did put upon the live Goat

Goat *Hazazel*, all the sins of the People, *Lev. 16*. God hath made him who knows no sin, to be made sin for us, that we might become the Righteousness of God in him, *2 Cor. 5. Acts 10*. Whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins in his Name. Therefore rather than to play the desperate, as *Cain, Achitophel, and Judas*, let us cry out with King *David*, *O blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. O blessed is he unto whom the Lord imputeth no sin, Psal. 31*. Or let us burst out into *St. Paul's* language, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? it is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, Rom. 8*. Let us therefore embrace this crucified Jesus, and say with the Blessed Virgin, *My Soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*. Or with the Glorified Spirits of Heaven, *To him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, be Glory and Strength for ever and ever, Amen*.

24. Christian Souls, if the vast number of your sins come into your remembrance, consider that it is not said, that the Blood of Christ cleanseth us only from a certain number of sins, but, *That if we confess our sins, he is Faithful and Just, that is, True and Merciful, to forgive us our sins; and that the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins*. Let them be never so numerous, drown them all as so many hellish Monsters, in the blood of thy Saviour; take hold of this Divine Jesus, with the Arms of Faith and Repentance; wrap your selves up in his Winding-sheet, repose your selves upon his Cross, and rest secure in the shadow of his Almighty intercession.

25. But if the grievousness of your crimes fright you, take hold at the same time of the Horns of this mystical Altar, and all the powers of Hell will not be able to pluck you thence. Comfort thy self, sinful Soul, for there cannot be a spot so black, nor so deep, but the Blood of Christ is able to wash it clean away: There

is no crime so grievous and horrid, but the Sacrifice of this Lamb without spot, that taketh away the sins of the world, can make an atonement for it. Let thy sins be never so great, they have their limits, but thy Redeemers Merits are without limits, and the efficacy of his sufferings continues for ever. To assure thee of this truth, and to encourage thee, he was pleased, upon the Cross, to discover the Riches of his Mercy upon a wretched Robber, who suffered then the hands of Justice for his crimes: as soon as he saw him moved with Repentance, he changed his infamous and painful Cross into a Paradise of Glory and Happiness, and filled his Soul with the sweetest Comforts of his Holy Spirit. This merciful Redeemer is the same yesterday, and to day, and shall be the same for ever. Therefore be never so foul and abominable a sinner, if thou dost groan under the burden of thy sins, and art moved with contrition, *Heb. 13.* thou oughtest not to cast off thy hopes, and to be discouraged; draw near with humility to thy Saviours Cross, and wash thy self in the Blood that comes out of his veins. All the diseased persons that entred into the pool of *Bethesda*, were healed of all manner of distempers, *Joh. 5.* Likewise all spiritual diseases are cured in this Divine Pool, of all their griefs; it is not necessary to stay till a good Angel from Heaven come to move the Waters, for Christ's Blood is always fresh, living, and of the same Vertue and Efficacy; we need not fear that others should step down before us, or that the throng should hinder us, for a Thousand worlds may be all healed at the same instant; neither do ye pretend that there is no body to cast you into this mystical Pool, for our Lord will never refuse to admit you when you shall have been Bedrid Eight and thirty years, as the poor man that was troubled with the Palsie: and when you shall be nailed to a Cross, as the good Thief, you may nevertheless dip your selves into this Divine Pool, and feel its saving and healing Vertue.

Vertue. It doth not only wash away the filth, and heal all thy diseases, but it gives also life to the Dead, and renders the living immortal: Whosoever thou art that dippest thy self in this precious Blood, thou mayest say with the Apostle St. Paul, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acception, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save sinners, of whom I am the cheif, *1 Tim. 1*. Howbeit I have obtained Mercy, The Lord will deliver me from all wicked work, and will preserve me to his Heavenly Kingdom, to him be Glory for ever and ever, *Amen. 1 Tim. 7*.

26. You understand therefore very well, believing Souls, that you have no cause to fear Death, seeing that all its Darts have been broken to pieces, all its Armor hath been torn, and that its spoils appear so visibly upon Christs Cross. You may see the Claws of this old Lion, the Paw of this devouring Bear, the Teeth and Poison of this infernal Serpent, and the Head of this prodigious Dragon; you may see death swallowed up into victory, and the Prince of Life leading it in triumph: follow then the Glorious Chariot of this noble Conqueror, singing with the Apostle. *O Death! where is thy Victory? O Grave! where is thy Sting? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law, but blessed be God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15.*

27. Therefore when God shall draw near to you, covered with the vail of Death, be not terrified; seek not to run from him, and to hide your selves from his all-seeing Eyes, unto whom darkness is as the noon-day, *Gen. 3*. Although you are by nature poor, wretched, blind and naked, you have more substantial Garments than Fig-leaves, for you have the leaves of the Tree of Life, that are designed for the salvations of the Gentiles, *Revel. 22*. The Leaves that shall never fade shall cover all your nakedness, and adorn your immortal Souls; for it is the Eternal Righteousness, the most accom-

accomplished Righteousness of our Lord Jesus, who hath been made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, *Dan. 19.* It is Jesus Christ himself who is named *The Lord our Righteousness*. It is the precious Garment of Salvation, the Glorious Cloak of Righteousness mentioned by the Prophet, *Isa. 61.* It is the Wedding Garment whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, without spot, and the fine and bright Linnen which are the Righteousness of the Saints, *Ezek. 16.* In short, it is a Garment which will not only cover and adorn you, but it will also heal all your infirmities, and make you become immortal, *Revel. 7.*

28. If you come before your Heavenly Father with this perfumed cloathing of your Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, *Gen. 27.* or rather, if you be cloathed with him as with a Garment, *Rom. 1.* You shall not only obtain the best and most advantageous Blessing, but you shall enter into the possession of the uncorruptable Inheritance, prepared for you from the beginning of the World. *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is Eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 6.*

A

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the fears of Death, by meditating upon the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O Merciful Saviour! who hast clothed thy self with our mortal Flesh, that thou mightest offer it up as a Sacrifice to God; succor me in my weakness, and increase the Faith and Hope which thou hast begun in my Soul. I see Death threatening to destroy me, and ready with its jaws open to devour me. But Lord, I come to cast my self before thy blessed Cross, I take hold of the Horns of this Altar, I dip my self in thy Blood, I put on the Robes of thy Righteousness, and wrap my self up in thy Death. O Holy Redeemer! I know that thou hast been distressed, and grievously perplexed at the approaches of Death; and that thine Agony hath been so bitter, that thou hast sweated drops of Blood, and the Holy Angels have come down to comfort thee; whereas thy Servants the Martyrs have gone to death, and their sufferings, with expressions of Joy, as to a most splendid Banquet, or to a Triumph. Thou hast prayed with strong Crying and Tears to be delivered from death, and that this Cup might pass away, so that thou mightest never taste of its bitterness; But Lord! thy death was not as mine, and as that of thy blessed Martyrs. Thy death was an atonement for the sins of the whole World; whereas our death is not intended as a satisfaction to God's justice, but rather to render us capable of receiving the blessed Fruits of his Eternal Compassions. Thou didst bear the strokes of God's Justice, and endure the fierceness of his wrath, enflamed against the sins which thou hast loaded on thy self: But we, instead of this consuming Fire, which thou hast quenched with thy precious Blood:

we perceive the flames of Love, instead of the Hand of thy justice ; we see thy Arms wide open to receive us into Eternal Happiness. Death, good Lord ! was armed with our sins and iniquities, and with all that is dreadful in Hell ; but I see that all the Armor of Death are hung upon thy Cross ; they are the Trophies, and everlasting marks of thy Glorious Victory. Thou hast felt, not only the most sensible Darts of Death, but also the most terrible Thunderbolts, and fearful Curses of the Law. Thou hast secured us from all that violence ; thou hast redeemed us from the dreadful Curses. When thou wast made a Curse for us, thou hadst not only to encounter with death, but also to destroy him who had the Empire of Death, and to break in pieces the Gates of Hell. Thou didst spoil Principalities and Powers, shewing them openly, and triumphing of them in thy Cross. O wonderful Saviour ! How marvellous are thy Works, and worthy of the continual admiration of Men and Angels ? Thou hast drunk up the very dregs of the Cup of God's fury, that we might never taste of it ; and thou hast taken upon thee all the punishment that our sins and offences had deserved, that we might never feel them. The grievous pangs alleviate my torments ; thy bruises and wounds are my health and cure ; thy fears do comfort and settle my mind, and thy distressed Soul doth fill mine full of joy and comfort ; thy crying doth appease the troubles of my Conscience, and thy drops of Blood do wash down my Tears ; thine affliction comforts me, thy sorrow is my joy, and thy bitterness is my sweetness ; thy death is my victory, and thy Cross is my Triumph ; I shall no longer apprehend to dye, seeing thou didst procure unto me Life and Immortality. O Glorious and Merciful Lord, the Kingdom of Heaven belongs unto thee by a twofold Right ; it belongs to thee, because thou art the only Son of God, and the Heir of all things ; it belongs to thee also, because thou hast purchased it with the infinite Merits of thy Sufferings ; the first is sufficient for thee, the second thou hast resigned unto us, that I might one day enjoy this Heavenly Kingdom, as the
fruits

fruits of thy Death, and the price of thy Blood. I have hoped in thee Lord, I shall never be confounded; I know that nothing impure or defiled shall enter into thine Holy Jerusalem, but thy Blood shall wash me from all my sins, and make me as white as Snow. O Glorious Lord! O thou that art wonderful! how precious is thy Death unto me? It is the payment of all my debts, the atonement of all my crimes, and the ransom of the whole World; It is our peace with God, our re-union with Heaven, and our reconciliation with the Blessed Angels of Light; It is the death of Death it self, and the ruine of Hell. In short, it hath not only drawn me out of an Abyss of Misery, freed me from Eternal Damnation, and the infinite torments of the bottomless Pit, but it hath purchased for me Heaven with all its Glory and Paradise, with its unspeakable Delights. David was much admired for making use of Goliath's Sword to cut off his Head; but who will admire and wonder at thee, O victorious Son of David, seeing thou hast swallowed up Death into Victory by thine own death? Sampson was wondred at because he killed a few Enemies by his death; but who will not wonder at thee, O Son of Righteousness, who by thy Death hast destroyed all the enemies of our Salvation, and given to death it self its death's wound? Jacob slept peaceably at the bottom of the mysterious Ladder, which reacht from the Earth up to Heaven; But, O my Lord God, I shall lay my self down, and find more peace and quiet at the bottom of thy blessed Cross; seeing that by its means I have access to the Father, unto whom thou hast reconciled me; seeing that I may with boldness go to the Throne of Grace, to obtain Mercy and Help in time of need. Lord Jesus, I discover in thy Cross, not only the source of my Sweetest Comforts, of my greatest Joys, and of my noblest expectations; but I learn also there, how to dye well, and I perceive all the Vertues in their greatest perfection, that should accompany my Soul at its Egress out of this Body. O Lord! Who art perfection it self, and who hast

hast left me such a notable Example, that I might imitate
 it, give me grace to express to all my Relations, that cor-
 dial and holy affection, and that tenderness which I see in
 thee; give me grace to forgive with all mine Heart mine
 Enemies, that I may pray God for them who have persecu-
 ted me with fury. Give me Grace in my greatest pains, to
 follow the example of thy sweet Nature, of thy Goodness,
 of thy Patience and noble Resolution. Inflame my Soul with
 an earnest Zeal for thy Glory, and with such a love as cau-
 sed thee to offer thy self up in Sacrifice to God. Here I am,
 O God, ready to perform thy Will; my Soul is none of mine,
 but thine, who art its faithful Creator, and its merciful
 Saviour. Seeing that thou hast paid its Ransom, that thou
 hast washed and cleansed it in thy Blood, cloathed it with thy
 Righteousness, and put it in a capacity of entering into thine
 Heavenly Sanctuary, and of appearing before the Father of
 Lights, do with it as it shall seem good unto thee. O sweet
 Jesus, who hast been pleased to Dye and be Crucified for me
 wretched Sinner, give me that Grace that I may for ever live
 and reign with thee, and that I may at every instant be ready
 to say with all my heart, I commend into thine hands
 my Spirit, for thou hast redeemed it, thou who art the
 strong and faithful God, Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

*The Fourth Consolation against the Fears of Death,
is to Meditate often upon our Lord Jesus Christ,
as he did lye in his Tomb.*

MAn doth naturally abhor and hate the sight of Graves; some there are that cannot pass by a Church yard, without expressing a distaste and secret displeasure; not only such as make their abode in glorious Palaces and stately Dwellings, but also such as

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reside in poor Huts, or in pitiful Cabins, such as are shut up in black Dungeons, or exposed to the injury of the weather, who have no other covering than the Sky, can ever think upon Death without fear, when they are to think, that this Body must go into the Bowels of the Earth, and lye down in a stinking and noisom Grave

If ye will banish from your Minds this dangerous apprehension, and these needless fears, we must consider seriously, with a religious application of our minds, That we must never abhor the Earth, because our Bodies have been made of Earth, it hath been as it were the Mother that brings us forth.

We must also consider, that it is the order of nature, that all composed Bodies should return at their dissolution every part to its first principle; therefore as the Soul mounts up to its first source, and returns to God that gave it; likewise it is no wonder, if the Body returns to Dust, because it proceeds from Dust, and God hath pronounced a just Sentence in the earthly Paradise, which shall never be revoked, *dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return, Gen. 3.* Nicodemus inquired of our Lord Jesus Christ, *How can a Man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his Mothers Womb and be born?* John 3. This ridiculous and unprobable conceit, is proved in a manner to be true in this occasion, for we must enter again into the Womb of the Earth our common Mother, that we might be Born again, and pass into another Life.

It is not amiss to consider often, the notable instances, and excellent representations of our Death, which St. Paul mentions in the 15 Chap. of the first Epistle to the *Corinth.* for our Bodies are as the Seed which is cast into the Earth, that it might bring forth. *O fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it dye.* It cannot flourish until it rots. The Students of Nature informs us, that the generation of one thing is the corruption of another. In this occasion we may say, that the corruption and dissolution of this
wretched

wretched Body, is the means and way that leads to a more glorious Generation. You that weep for the decease of your Friends and Kindred, when you see them laid in their Graves, remember what *David* saith, They that sow in tears, shall reap with songs of Joy, *Psalms* 126.

Consider that Death is the way of all flesh, and the Grave is the last retreat which God hath appointed for all living; so that if we be loath to enter into the Tomb, we must desire Almighty God to grant us a Lodging by ourselves, to change the common course of nature, or to create for us another World.

Now the Grave is not only the general Rendezvous of all Mankind, but it is a Couch where they rest after this laborious and painful race; therefore when the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of the Death of good Men, he saith, *They enter into peace, they rest in their Beds*, *Isa.* 57. For when he looks to the blessed estate of their Souls, he tells us, that they are entred into that great and eternal Peace that reigns in Heaven; but when he casts an eye upon their Bodies, he saith, that *they rest in their Beds*. For this cause the places appointed to bury the Dead, are named sleeping places, by the *Greeks*, to teach us that there they are fallen asleep, in expectation of the great Morne, when God shall send to awaken them, with the sound of the Archangels Trumpet.

Therefore when *Jacob* was ready to give up the Ghost, he commanded his Son *Joseph* not to bury him in *Egypt*, that he might sleep with his Fathers, *Gen.* 47. Likewise *Job* speaks in the same manner, *I shall sleep in the Dust of the Earth*, *Job* 7. And God held this Language unto *Moses*, *Thou art going to sleep with thy Fathers*, *Deut.* 31. and to *David*, *when thy days be fulfilled, thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers*, *2 Sam.* 7. And when the Prophet *Daniel* speaks of such as were deceased since the Creation of the World, he saith, *They sleep in the dust of the Earth*, *Dan.* 12.

Especially take notice, Christian Souls, that when God spoke to *Moses* from the midst of the burning bush, he told him, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, *Exod. 4.* they had been dead many Ages before, nevertheless, God names himself their God: *Now God is not the God of the Dead but of the Living*, *Mat. 22.* Those holy Men were not Dead, in regard of their Souls, because they were Immortal, and God had admitted them into Eternal Bliss. Their Bodies also, to speak properly, were not Dead, but slept in their Graves, as our Saviour said of *Fairus's* Daughter, *The Damsel is not Dead but Sleepeth*, *Matt. 9.* and of *Lazarus*, *Lazarus our friend Sleepeth*, *John 11.* Moreover, we may justly say, that the Estate of our Bodies in the Grave, is better and more pleasant than our daily sleep; for when we rest in our Beds, we be often disturbed in our fancy; we labour and sweat, and the richest and most magnificent Couches, are not free from this evil; whereas in our Grave, our Bodies are at rest, and secure from all sense of pain, so that they enjoy a perfect Sleep, and a rest without disturbance.

The greatest Princes, and the proudest Monarchs, are constrained to take up their Lodging, one after another, here in this House, which God hath prepared for all living, and to repose themselves in that Couch, which is to receive all the Sons of *Adam*. When the Sacred History gives an Account of the Kings of *Judea* and of *Israel*, it adds at the end of their Life, *He slept with his Fathers*. Let us be never so wretched, poor and miserable, we shall all be entertained in this dwelling of Kings, and lay our selves down upon their Beds; therefore when *Job*, through the grievousness of his pain complained, because he had not Dyed immediately after his Birth, he saith, *for now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept then, had I been at rest with Kings and Councillors of the Earth, which built desolate places for themselves, or with Princes that had Gold, who filled their Houses with Silver.*

It is in this House, and upon this Couch, that the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and generally all the Faithful do rest, who have lived in all the Ages of the World, as it is Recorded of St. *Stephen*, that when he had commended his Soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus, that *he fell asleep*, Acts. 7. Therefore when St. *Paul* reproves the *Corinthians*, and acquaints them that God had punished them with divers Diseases and Death, because they had profaned the Lord's Supper, he tells them, *For this cause many are feeble and sick amongst you, and many sleep*. And when he speaks of all those that were dead in the profession of Christ's Religion, he saith, *they sleep in Jesus*, and he names them, *they that sleep*. Now we are not better and nobler than the Saints of Paradise, to expect that our Bodies should receive a better and more favourable entertainment than they.

In short, there is nothing more able to remove from our fancy, that horror of our Graves, than the consideration of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is buried into the Earth as well as other Men, and hath laid himself down there. He hath Sanctified and perfumed that place with his Divine Presence; he hath made it the object of our desires, and the cause of our glory; for there no Subject but judgeth it an honour to lodge in his Princes Chamber, and to lay down and sleep upon the Bed where he hath taken his rest, although he hath remained there but a moment, or an hour. O glorious Tomb, where Death and Life, Disgrace and Glory are lodged together, and where the Prince of Life, the Author of all Honour and Happiness did rest himself.

Christians, who desire to banish from your Souls all fears of Death, and apprehensions of your Graves, look upon your Sepulchers in the same manner, as if you should see there Jesus Christ the King of Glory, the Prince of your Salvation yet remaining asleep. When old *Jacob* heard the mistaken news of the Death of his Son *Joseph*, he was overcome with a violent grief, so that he

cry'd out, *I shall go down with sorrow to my Son into the Grave.* But the certain news of the Death and Burial of our true *Joseph*, will fill us full of unspeakable comforts; and will cause us to speak in another manner, *I shall go down to my Father into the Sepulcher with Joy.* The Prophet *Elias* raised to Life a Child, which laid in his Chamber upon his Bed; when he stretched himself upon it, the Soul that was departed came again; and *Elisha* raised another in the same manner, by applying his Mouth to the Childs, his Hands and Eyes to the little Infants. But believing Soul, God works for thee in this occasion, a far more wonderful Miracle, for our Resurrection and Life, proceed from the Death and Burial of our great Prophet. If we go into this holy Tomb, if we lay ourselves down upon this precious Body, if we embrace it with a true and living Faith, and a serious Repentance, he will quicken us again, and cause us to become Immortal, for he hath been pleased to enter into the estate of the dead, with an intent to procure unto us, a blessed and a glorious Immortality.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the horrible aspect of the Grave, by looking upon our Lord Jesus Christ stretched out in his Tomb.

O Wonderful Mediator between God and Man! Thou art God Immortal, and yet hast vouchsafed to take upon thee our Mortal Nature, and to Dye for me miserable Sinner, and to remain for a time in the estate of the Dead, that thou mightest procure unto me a blessed Immortality. Give me Grace to Meditate as I ought, upon thy Sacred Body, wrapped up in a winding sheet, and laid in the Earth;
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for by this means, O sweet Jesus, I shall be brought not to abhor the Grave, I shall look with a stedfast and settled countenance on the Grave digging, into which I must enter, when thou shalt appoint it, for the Servant is not greater than his Master. It belongs not to the Creature to lift it self up above the Creator; seeing that I expect to share in thy Glory and Exaltation, it is but just and reasonable that I take some part in thy Disgraces and Abasement. My reason assisted by thine holy Spirit, teacheth me that I must be content to be wrapped up in thy Darkness, and remain with thee in the valey of the Shadow of Death; seeing that I hope to be cloathed one day with Light, and Crowned with an eternal Life. I must not only look upon the Grave without Fear, but I shall consider it with Joy, seeing that thou hast honoured it with thine holy presence, and perfumed it with thy Divine and celestial perfumes. I shall behold it in the same manner, as if thou didst yet lye down in it, as if I were to keep thee company there, my Lord my God. A dead, returned to Life again, when he did but touch the Bones of thy Prophet; but I do not only touch the Prince of Prophets, but embrace thee with Faith, as thou art dead for my Sins, and as resting in thy Grave for my Salvation. Thou shalt therefore make me sensible of thy Divine Vertue, put in me the Seeds of Immortality, and raise my hopes up to Heaven. Already my Soul hath a share in the first Resurrection, and one day this crazy Body shall return to newness of life. If my Resurrection be not so quick and speedy, as that of the Dead raised to Life by the Prophet; It shall be far more glorious and lasting, that I may bless thee with all thy Saints, and praise thee for ever, with thine Inheritance in Heaven, Amen.

CHAP. XVII.

The Fifth Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to Meditate upon the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

AS there is nothing more grievous and unsufferable than to behold a proud and insulting Enemy, who is always victorious, and whom none can overcome in his insolent and braving humor; likewise, there is nothing more pleasant and comfortable, than to see such a pride cast down, and to overcome such an Enemy. Therefore the Children of Israel, who had long groaned under the cruel tyranny of Pharaoh, sung with Joy a Song of Triumph and Thanksgiving, when God destroyed that wretched Tyrant, and Buried him and his Army in the waves of the Red Sea. For this cause, when the Red Dragon, the ancient Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, *Exod. 15.* who seduceth whole Nations, was overcome, and cast down from Heaven to the Earth; There were Songs of Joy and Gladness heard in Heaven, *Revel. 12.* *Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ, for the Accuser of our Bretheren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night, therefore rejoyce ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*

From hence let us conclude, Christian Souls, as it was a grievous Affliction, and a sensible Grief, to behold Death tyrannising over all the World, and shutting up in its Dungeons, Kings and Monarchs, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and generally all the Children of Adam, of what condition or degree soever; likewise it is a great comfort, and unspeakeable joy to us, to behold this cruel and proud Enemy brought down, overcome and

and disarmed, to see our Lord Jesus Christ marching out of Death's fortifications, loaden with its spoils; rejoyce therefore ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them, for the Murderer of our Brethren is swallowed up into Victory.

We who are the Members of this great Conqueror, have a share in his Honour and Glory, in his Person, we are Conquerors of Death, so that we may say with the Apostle, *That God hath quickned us together, and raised us up with him.*

This Prince of Life, hath not only loosened all the bands of Death, and broken to pieces all its chains, but he hath led away Death in Triumph, and made it subject to his Celestial Empire. He hath an absolute power over Death, as he himself declares in these words, *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am a live for evermore, Amen, and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*

For it stands with reason, that if this invincible Lord, when he was in the Prison of Death, commanded over Death it self; if he broke in pieces its Iron bars, and its Brazen gates; if he caused the Dead to go out, and led them into the Holy City; now that he is out of the Grave a victorious Conqueror, he must needs command with an uncontrollable power, this dreadful Enemy which he hath already overcome, and brought under by his Almighty Hand.

O Death! fret and fume out thy rage and fury, I see that thou art tied as a Prisoner, to the Tryumphing Charriot of Jesus Christ my Saviour, and I am certain that thou canst do nothing without leave, and that thou canst not go a step, unless he lengthens thy Chain.

As Joshua, when he had overcome the Kings of Canaan, called for his Captains, and spoke to them in this manner, *Come near and put your feet upon the necks of these Kings, fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage.* Likewise, we may imagine, believing Souls, that our Di-

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vine *Joshua*, now that he hath conquered Death, calls to us from Heaven, tread upon this wretched Death with boldness, fear not, nor be dismayed.

The Children of *Israel* that trembled at the threatnings of *Goliath*, were freed from all apprehensions, when they saw him fall with a Stone from *David's* sling, so that the most timorous could have freely put their feet upon his Neck. And shall not you Christians, banish from your Hearts all fears and dread of Death, now that you see that it is cast down at the feet of our true *David*, that great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls? for although it opens its Jaws, and that it comes out flames of Fire, it hath nevertheless received the Stroke of Death, and is ready to give up the last gasp.

And as the servant of *Jonathan* the Son of *Saul*, dispatched and killed those whom his Master had cast down; Thus we need but pursue the glorious Victories of the Son of the King of Kings, or rather, we need but gather up the pleasant Fruits of his Conquests; for this Prince of Life that hath overcome Death for us, offers to overcome it also in us with the Weapons with which he arms us. In short, to speak properly, there can be no Death for such as are Incorporated in Jesus Christ by a true and lively Faith; for he that lives and believeth in him shall never Dye, and he that believeth in him, though he were dead, yet shall he live, *Joh. 11.*

A Prayer and Meditation for the believing Soul that strengthens it self against the Fear of Death, by a Meditation upon the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus who hast been fully declared to be the Son of God, with power by thy Resurrection from the Dead, and who livest for ever and ever, strengthen me in my weakness, comfort me in my Sorrows, and drive from my Soul all Fears and apprehensions of Death. O wonderful Saviour! I need no longer fear this cruel and proud enemy, for thou hast broken all its fetters and chains, and hast overcome Death and the Grave. O glorious and triumphing Monarch, what cause have I to dread a discomfited and disarmed Enemy, whom I see lying under my feet, and chained to thy Triumphant Chariot; I need but follow the sacred Footsteps of thy Victories, and gather its excellent Fruits. If thou hast been able to deal with Death, when thou wast shut up in a Dungeon; if thou didst then bring down its pride, and carry away its prisoners; what may not I expect from thy Victorious and Almighty Arm, now that thou hast in hand the Keys of Hell and of Death? O most mighty and merciful Lord! Thou hast not only overcome Death for me, but thou wilt also overcome it by me, who am thy Child, and the Sheep of thy Pasture, whereof thou hast paid the Ransome. Thou art not only raised from the Dead, but thou art also the Resurrection and the Life. Thou the Prince of Life, and the Lord of Glory and Immortality, so that he that lives and believeth in thee, shall never Dye, and whosoever believeth in thee, though he were Dead, yet shall he live. Sampson was worthily admired when he slept until midnight, rose up and carried away the Gates of Gaza upon his Shoulders, up to an high Mountain; but

but who would not admire thee, O invincible Nazarite! who having slept untill the third day in the bowels of the Earth, didst rise again by thy Divine Vertue, carry away the Gates of Hell, and made them to become the Gates of Heaven, and the entrance into thy celestial Paradise. Let me Dye, seeing that my Redeemer liveth, and seeing that he intends to introduce me into an happy Life, purchased for me with his most precious Blood, and secured unto me by his glorious resurrection. Amen.

CHAP. XVIII

The Sixth Consolation against the Fears of Death, is the Ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven, and his sitting at the Right Hand of God.

IT is a great joy and comfort indeed, to behold a cruel and proud Enemy overcome and disarmed, and our selves freed, by that means, from the heavy yoke of his unsufferable Tyranny; but our joy would be turned into grief, and our comfort into sadness, if we did but perceive at the same time the Author of our Freedom, choked with his own Blood, and breathing out the last gasp, at the moment of his Victory, that our Sanctification might be entire, and our joy perfect; such a Friend to our welfare, should continue afterwards alive, and receive the Honours and Rewards due to him, for such an expression of his Valour and Kindness to us. There is no Enemy more cruel and more terrible than Death, we have beheld it disarmed upon the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and perfectly vanquished and subdued by his glorious Resurrection. But if with the eye of our Faith, we look a little higher, to behold the glorious Ascension of our Divine Saviour, we shall see this
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same Death bound to his Triumphant Charriot, and we shall see this glorious Redeemer exalted above the highest Heavens, and sitting gloriously at the Right Hand of God; we shall see him invested in an almighty Power, worshipped by all the Creatures; we shall see him commanding, not only the Angels of Light, and the celestial Spirits that are about his Magnificent Throne, but commanding also over this World, over Death, the Devils, and Hell. Because he hath been obedient unto Death, yea, to the ignominious Death of the Cross, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth, *Phil. 4.* and that every Tounge should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Every Soldier doth not always bear a part in the Triumph of their General, and all the Subjects doth not taste of their Princes happiness; but as we are the Brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Members of his Mystical Body, we have a share in his Triumph, and in the glory of his Empire; therefore the Apostle *St. Paul* informs us, *that our Life*, that is to say, our glory and eternal Felicity is hid with Christ in God: in another place, he tells us, in express words, *That God who is rich in Mercy, hath made us sit in Heavenly places with Jesus Christ.*

This glorious Saviour is gone to take possession of the Kingdom of Heaven, not only for himself, but also in our names, and for us; therefore he informs the Holy Apostles, and all true believers, *That in his Fathers House there are many Mansions, I am going to prepare a place there for you.* In the same manner he speaks in that admirable Prayer, in the which he consecrates himself to God, for the great Work of our Redemption, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* For the same reason, *St. Paul* tells us,

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in his Epistles to the *Hebrews*, for our comfort, *Heb. 6.* that Christ is gone into Heaven *as our forerunner.*

The High Priest of the Jews did enter into the earthly Sanctuary, to present himself before God for the people, *Heb. 9.* Thus our Lord Jesus Christ is gone into the Heavenly Sanctuary, to appear for us in the presence of God. The High Priest of the Jews, did bear upon his Breast and Shoulders, the Names of the 12 Tribes of *Israel*, but Jesus Christ hath graven us upon his Heart, according to the Prayer of the Spouse in the *Canticles*, *Cant. 8. Set me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm, for Love is as strong as Death.* The High Priest of the Jews, did cast off the Names of the Twelve Tribes with the Robes; But neither Death, nor Life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ, *Rom. 8.*

The Royal Diadem that was put upon *Esthers* Head, never caused her to forget her People and Parentage; she was mightily grieved for her *Hamans* Conspiracy, and the Decree which he had caused King *Abasuerus* to Sign and Seal with his Signet. I may likewise say, that the Glory unto which our Lord Jesus Christ is now raised, can never make him forget the People that he hath redeemed with his blood. He is not unmindful of Satans plots, nor of the Sentence of Doom pronounced against us by the great Monarch of the World, and confirmed with his great Seal. His glorious Head may be Crowned with the Rainbow, but his merciful Heart is inflamed with Love for us. He thinks it no disgrace to acknowledg us for his Brethren, and to pray God for us upon his glorious Throne, where thousand millions wait upon him, and ten thousand thousands Worship him. He is able to Save, to the full, all such as draw near to God through him, for he lives always to interceed for us. If the Father hath always granted him his Request, when he was in his greatest abasement, can we imagine, that his Intercession will be fruitless now, that he is ascended up to the highest Glory?

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From the Chariot of his Triumph he beholds all our Encounters and our struglings with Death, he sees all the Enemies that Assaults us, and all the Dangers unto which we are exposed. He is acquainted with the deep Malice and crafty Designs of the Enemies of our Salvation. He perceives all the Darts that they let fly against us; therefore he covers us with his Shield, and will not suffer us to yield to Temptation. He fulfills his Vertue in our Infirmities, and makes us more than Conquerors; he hath an eye always upon his Flock, he holds his Sheep all in his hand, and none is able to pluck them from thence.

When he was upon Earth in his Agony, at this word that dropt out of his Mouth, *I am he*, *John 10.* his Enemies fell backward; and when he was in Deaths Prison, he constrained it to obey him; and shall not he now that he is exalted up to the highest Heavens, in the glory of his Triumph, have the same power and command over Death, the World, and Hell? When he walked upon the Waters, he cried to his Apostles, *It is I, be not affraid*, *John 6.* how much rather may he speak unto us in this manner, now that he sits upon the Throne that can never be moved? *Christian Soul*, who trembles at the approaches of Death, imagine that the Lord Jesus, Crowned with Glory, calls to thee from Heaven, fear not, for I call thee, and hold out unto thee my Arms, I that am thy Saviour and Redeemer, who have satisfied for all thy sins with my Blood, and who have redeemed thee from the Curse of the Law and eternal Damnation. I have disarmed Gods Justice, vanquished Hell, broken the Serpents Head, and swallowed up Death into Victory. I have purchased for thee, the Glories of Heaven, and the Delights of Paradise. I have trampled upon the World, and all its powers. I am worshiped by all the Church triumphing in Heaven, and by Legions of holy Angels that fly about my Throne. I will therefore send some of them to guard thee, and when thou shalt leave the Body where thou li-
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vest as a Stranger, they shall bring up thy Soul into this glorious abode of Immortallity, whether I am come to prepare a place for thee.

Without doubt, if the Author of our hope is fixed in the vail that is in Heaven, where Jesus Christ is gone in as our forerunner, we shall not apprehend the most contrary and boisterous storms raised against us, by the Prince of the powers of the Air, who works with efficacy in the Children of Rebellion; we shall tread under foot all the billows of this troublesom Sea, and through these swelling waves we shall march safe to our Divine Jesus. If at any time we begin to sink, and that our Soul is frightened, this Almighty Lord, who hath not only delivered himself, but is the Saviour and Deliverer of his Church, will speak unto us, as to his Apostle, *O Man of little Faith why didst thou doubt*, knowest thou not that I command the Winds, that I can still the Waves, and drive from the Tempest? knowest thou not that I have in my hands the Keys of Hell and of Death? When a person is to go to a place of rest and happiness, and that he cannot pass to it, but through a painful and thorny passage, he marcheth with resolution and courage; when a friend of his is gone before, and stretcheth out unto him his hand to help him. Now it is not possible to attain to the ofglories Heaven, and the joys of Parrrdise, but through the passage of Death, a passage very uneasy and grievous to our present seeming; But Jesus Christ who loves us with an eternal Love, hath gone through this passage before us, he is past from this World to the Father, he is gone to his God, and to our God: And that we might go to him, he hath sent the Light of his holy Word to direct us, *John 2.* he vouchsafes unto us his Staff and his Rod to comfort us, *Psa. 23.* and stretcheth out the right hand of his Almighty Power, to cause us to pass from Death to Life; *where I am*, saith he, *there shall also my Servant be*, *John 12.*

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When the Apostles went up to *Jerusalem*, and Jesus went before them, *Mark* 9. they were terrified and frightened, but we that go up to the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and tread upon the footsteps of this mighty Saviour, ought to be full of boldness and Christian confidence.

This great God and Saviour Reigns in Heaven, he Commands in the Earth, the Sea and the deep, therefore we may Dye without Fear, and with an holy Joy. For who would not rejoyce to enter into the Glorious Palace of Immortality, where we should see, not only the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, the holy and blessed Virgin, with all the Saints of Paradise, but we shall see face to face our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom so many Kings and Prophets have desired to see and hear? While we remain in these Bodies, we are absent from the Lord, therefore we rather desire to be absent from the Body, and to be with Christ; this Consideration causeth the holy Apostle to confess, *That his desire was to depart and to be with Christ, which was far better for him, Phil. II.*

The Queen of *Sheba* left her Kingdom, and came from a corner of the Earth to see King *Solomon*, who was but a Type of Christ, and who had but a little of his wisdom and glory; and is there any Treasure on Earth, any Honour in this Age, or pleasure in this Life, that might hinder us from going to see our Saviour Jesus Christ? When he was in his Infancy, the Shepherds left their Flocks and made hast towards *Bethlehem* to look upon him, the wise Men came from the East to adore him, and if he were yet on Earth, we should undertake a tedious Pilgrimage to the ends of the World, and part with our dearest enjoyments to see him. But the little Vilage of *Bethlehem*, is nothing in comparison of the celestial *Jerusalem*; and what is the sight of the Lord Jesus in swadling Cloathes, lying in a Manger, and in the Arms of his Blessed Mother, in comparison of the sight of a Christ cloathed with Light, Crowned with Glory, and sitting at the right hand of

God the Father, upon a Magnificent Throne, Worshiped by all the Angels and the glorified Spirits. The Father of the Faithful was transported with Joy, when he saw in Spirit the day of the Lord; and the Spouse in the *Canticles* was exceeding glad when she heard him knocking at her door; and old *Simon* was ravished above measure when he held Christ in his Arms; how much more shall we be transported and and ravished into admiration and Joy, when we shall look upon him as he is now in the highest Glory, and raised to the most magnificent Estate, when we shall enjoy him never to leave him again? When *St. Stephen* beheld the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God the Father, his Face became radiant as that of an Angel. Therefore how luminous and shining shall our Countenances be, when we shall be entered into these places of Light, and when we shall behold with open face this Blessed Redeemer for ever?

When old *Jacob* heard that *Joseph* was alive and Reigning in *Egypt*, whom he had so tenderly loved, and for whom he had shed so many tears, he was most passionately desirous to see again this dear Son, and to behold his glory, *It is enough saith he, Joseph is yet alive, I will go and see him before I dye*, Gen. 45. And what think you believing Souls, when you understand that your true *Joseph*, whom you heartily love, Lives and Reigns above in Heaven, and that he is there Worshipped by all the glorified Spirits; do not you earnestly desire to see his Face, and to behold his Divine Glory and Happiness? This old Father was weak and feeble through Age, and oppressed with Grief, but his Spirit did revive when he saw the Wagons that *Joseph* had sent to fetch him; and you my Christian Brethren, when old Age and Sickness have weakened your bodies, and grief and displeasure have undermined your Hearts, do not you feel your selves revive when Death draws near, and you perceive with the eye of Faith, the Horses and Charriots which Christ hath sent to carry you away to the Paradise of his Glory?

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Seeing that *Joseph* received his Father and Brethren with Tears of Joy, and all the House of *Pharaoh* rung with outward expressions of gladness, with what Joy, with what kindness and love will Christ embrace us, and what Joy will there be in Heaven at our arrival? it is not to be expressed but with the Tongues of Angels. *Joseph* fed his Father and his Brethren, but he never yielded up unto them any part of his Glory: Whereas our Lord Jesus Christ who excels *Joseph* as much in power and Glory, as in Love and Mercy, shall not only feed us with the Bread of his Kingdom, and give us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleasure, but he will also impart unto us some of his Glory and Magnificence, as he promised to his Apostles, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, Luk. 22. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne, be thou faithful until Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life, Rev. 3.* *Joseph's* Brethren, notwithstanding his Glory and Power, became afterward Slaves, but Jesus Christ will place upon our Head a Crown of pure Gold. *Joseph* could never defend his Brethren from Death, they all Died one after another, and he also in his time yielded up the Ghost; But Jesus Christ who is Risen from the Dead, Dieth no more, Death hath no more Dominion over him, so that he lives for ever and ever, and will cause us all to become Immortal. Therefore instead of desiring as *Jacob*, to live to go down into *Egypt*, to see his Son *Joseph*, we should earnestly desire to Dye, that we might ascend up into Heaven, there to behold our Lord Jesus Christ, our Father and Redeemer. When *Jacob* embraced again his wonderful and beloved Child, in the exceeding transport of his Joy and Love, he burst forth in to this kind of Language, *Let me now Dye, now that I have seen again thy Face, and that thou art alive.* On the contrary, when we shall embrace Christ in his Glory, when we should behold his Divine Countenance, we shall speak in another manner,

my Lord and my God, seeing that I now look upon thee alive, and Raigning in Heaven, I shall live also and Raign with thee for ever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a believing Soul who strengthens it self against the Fears of Death, by considering the glorious Ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven, and his sitting at the right hand of God.

O Holy and Divine Saviour, I have often looked upon thy generous Behaviour and glorious Victories, to strengthen my self against all apprehensions of Death, but if thou wilt render my joy most perfect and accomplished, give me Grace to Meditate upon thy Divine Triumph. As thou hast engaged in many Encounters for my sake, and hast vouchsafed unto me a share in thy Victory, grant me also a share in thy glorious Ascension and Triumph. As thou hast suffered for my Sins, and art risen again for my Justification, thou art also ascended up into Heaven to prepare a place for me; thou art willing that I should be admitted into thy Noble and Divine Palace, that I should be where thou art, that I may behold thy Glory which thou hast enjoyed with God the Father, before the Creation of the World. O sweet and Merciful Lord, what cause have I to fear to go to Heaven, seeing that thou art there seated in the highest Glory and Felicity, and that thou stretchest out thy merciful hand to receive and admit me? Have not I good reason to expect to be glorified in thy Kingdom, seeing that thou thyself dost bestow upon those that serve thee, the Immortal Crowns and Scepters? O great God and Saviour, thy Throne is surrounded with Glory and Splendor, nevertheless, I will draw

draw near unto it with boldness, for it is a Throne of Love, and a Throne of Mercy, unto which every penitent Sinner may come. Round about this glorious Throne, I see a Rainbow of an Emerald colour, that certifies me that thy Covenant is everlasting. When thy Glory and Majesty did increase, thy Love for me did not lessen, and thy compassion and goodness were always the same. Thou art the same yesterday and to day, and thou shalt always be the same for ever. Thou hast been pleased for my Salvation to lye in a Manger, and to be nailed to a Cross. Thou hast given thy Soul for my Ransome, and hast spilt thy precious Blood to wash and cleanse me from my Sins, and to make me a way, that I might enter into thine holy Sanctuary. In the midst of all that Glory and Light with which thou art now cloathed, thou hast not thought it a scorn to acknowledge me for thy Brother, and for a Member of thy Mystical Body. It is for my sake that thou appearest before thine Heavenly Father; it is for me that thou offereest up unto him Prayers and Supplications. O wonderful Lord, it is in thy power to give unto me the things which thou hast merited by thy Sufferings, and which thou desirest for me by thy Prayers and Intercession, for all power is given unto thee in Heaven and in Earth. O Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, hast not thou given unto us this great and gracious promise, When I shall be lifted up from the Earth, I shall draw all Men after me? And is it not for us, that thou hast prayed in this excellent manner, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me? Seeing therefore that thou hast left this wretched Earth, to go and Raign above in Heaven, take unto thee my Soul, O wonderful Redeemer, and deliver it from this valley of Tears and Misery, cause it to understand at the time of its departure these words of joy and eternal comfort, Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise. Lord Jesus draw me with the cords of thy Mercy and Grace, and I shall run after thee. And seeing that I must of necessity pass

through Death to come to thee the Prince of Life and Immortality, give me Grace to consider it in the same manner as the Prophet Elias did the Fiery Charriots that carried him up to Heaven, or as Jacob did the Waggon that carried him into Egypt, to his Son that did Raign there ; this holy Father, in a transport of joy, cried out, let me see my Son Joseph again, and then let me Dye. But when I shall be ravished with an unspeakable and glorious joy, I shall speak it in another manner. Let me Dye that I may behold my true Joseph, the Soul of my Soul, the light of Life, the Author of my Glory and Happiness. O sweet Jesus, I shall freely and willingly leave this wretched and crasie dwelling, to enter into thy heavenly Palace to behold thy Glory and Magnificence. O King of Kings and Lord of Lords, when shall I hear that Divine Wisdom that drops from thy Lips ? and when shall I see thee sitting upon the Throne of thy Glorious Majesty, where a thousand thousands wait upon thee, and ten millions Worship thee ? When shall I enter into the Glorious Company of the Saints and Blessed Spirits that Sing forth thy Praises, and cast at thy feet their most precious Crowns ? O glorious Monarch, that art now in thy Kingdom, enjoying a perfect happiness, forget not thy poor Servant, be not unmindful of thy Son or Daughter, who am now overwhelmed with the sorrows of this miserable life, and the anguish of Death. Let not the Songs of the holy Angels, and applauses of all the glorified Spirits, hinder thee from listning to my Sighs and Groans. O Almighty and merciful Lord, look upon me with the eyes of thy Love, and reach unto me thine helping hand. Send unto me thine Angels of Light, to receive my Soul, and protect me from the Angels of Darkness that endeavour to destroy me, and to drag me headlong into Hell. Let Some of those glorious Spirits that wait for thine orders, and fly at thy command, deliver me from Death, and carry me upon their wings into thy Bosom. I see the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God the Father, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit. Amen.

CHAP. XIX.

The Seventh Consolation against the Fears of Death, is our strict and unseparable union with Jesus Christ, by the means of his holy Spirit and the first Fruits of our Blessed Immortality.

Our Lord Jesus Christ doth not only live and triumph in Heaven, but it is from thence our life, our glory, and our blessed Immortality proceed. For as the Father hath life in himself, he hath also given to the Son to have Life in himself; and as the Father raiseth and quickeneth the Dead, likewise the Son quickeneth whomsoever he will. So that we may not only say to him as St. Peter, *Thou hast the words of eternal life, John 6.* but we may justly speak to him in David's Language, *with thee is the fountain of Life, in thy light shall we see light, Psal. 36.* Therefore all those that are united and incorporated into Jesus Christ, do participate of the fulness of his holy Spirit, and by that means they became Immortal. Now by the vertue of Christ's Death and Passion, we are not only made partakers of the Fruits of his Sufferings, but we are united to, and Incorporated in him, so that by that means, we have obtained not only the great and precious promises of Glory and Immortality, which he hath purchased for us by the infinite merits of his Sufferings, but we receive the First-Fruits and foretastes of our future blessedness.

He that is lifted up and dwells on high, quickens the Spirits of the humble, *Isa. 57.* he dwells in our hearts by Faith, *Ephes. 31.* he pours into our Souls his holy and quickning Spirit, for because we are the Children of God,

he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to cry Abba Father, *Gal. 4.* Whosoever hath not this Spirit of the Lord Jesus, he is none of his. By the means of this Spirit he dwells in us and we in him, we become the Members of his Body, and we may boast that we are his Flesh and his Bones.

All things that are most strictly united by Nature or Art, are employed to represent this admirable union, *John 6.* which we enjoy with Jesus Christ, by the means of his Spirit that quickens us, *Rom. 13.* From hence are derived these expressions of the holy Apostles, *We have put on the Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 3.* And that *when we draw near to him who is the living stone, rejected of Men, but lifted up and of great price with God, 1 Pet. 2.* we like so many living stones, are built up together to make a Spiritual House. For the same reason our Saviour informs us, *John 15.* that he is the true Vine, and that we are the branches. And St. Paul assures us, that if we are become one Plant with him, by the conformity of his Death, we shall also be one by the resemblance of his Resurrection, *Rom. 6.*

To shew unto us, that this Sacred Union contains many ties of Love, our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as our Brother, our Father, and our Bridegroom; therefore the Apostle tells us, that he thinks it no Disgrace to own us for his Brethren, in saying, *Heb. 1.* I will declare thy name unto my Brethren; and also where he informs us, *Rom. 8.* that God had predestinated us to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many Brethren. And after his Resurrection, he speaks in this manner to Mary Magdalen, *John 20.* Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my Brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God, *Heb. 2.* Therefore this glorious Redeemer shewing himself unto God with all the Elect, saith, *Here I am, and the Children which thou hast given me, Hosea 2.* And by the Mouth of Hosea he speaks to

to his Church, and makes this promise unto her, I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteousness and in Judgment, and in loving kindness and in Mercies. From hence it is, that this Church is called, *The Spouse of the Lamb in the Revelations*; and in the *Canticles*, the Spiritual Union betwixt Christ and his Church, is expressed by a continual Allusion, to a Marriage between Man and Woman.

And because our Meat and Drink are turned into our Body and Substance, Jesus Christ assures us, *That his Flesh is truly Meat, and his Blood is truly Drink. That he is the true Bread come down from Heaven that gives Life to the World, and that whosoever shall eat him shall live for ever.*

But amongst all the Similitudes borrowed to represent our Union with Jesus Christ by his holy Spirit, there is none employed more frequently in holy Scripture, than that of the Humane Body, for there is not any more proper for us; all the Spirits that give life and motion proceed from the Head, and as soon as the Members are separated from it they Dye. In the like manner the Spirit that quickens us, and makes us become new Creatures, proceeds from Jesus Christ; so that whosoever is separated from this Head, he falls into Death and Eternal Destruction. And as there are many Members, nevertheless they make up but one Body, because they are all animated with the same Spirit, and they are kept alive by the same Head; likewise, there be many Members belonging to Christ's Mystical Body, some engaged yet upon Earth, and others glorified in Heaven, nevertheless they make up but one only Mystical and Spiritual Body, for they are all quickened by the same Spirit, and receive all the celestial influences from the same Head. St. Paul teacheth us this Doctrine in express terms, *1 Cor. 12. For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body being many are one Body, so also is Christ, for by one Spirit are we all Baptised into one Body, whether we be Jews*
or

or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. Finally, because the same spirit that is in our Lord, as in the Head and Fountain, and in the Church in general, as in the Body which is quickned and moved, is also in every particular Member. The Holy Apostle is not satisfied to call this Spiritual Body of Christ and his Church, Christ; but he tells us moreover, that whosoever is *united unto him, is made but one Spirit with him.*

These and such like Representations, let them be never so lively and noble, are but dark shadows and unperfect Images of our Union with Jesus Christ by his holy Spirit; for the richest and most Magnificent Garment, can never keep off from the Body Diseases, nor hinder the approaches of corruption that creeps upon it. There is no foundation never so firm and well settled, that can free the house built upon it from the ruines and breaches of time and the weather. Although the Sap mounts up from the root of the Vine, and runs into the twigs and branches, they wither at last and are cast into the fire. The rarest Meats, and the most delicious Drinks, can never make our Bodies become Immortal, Death snatcheth away the Brother from the Brother, the Father from the Child, and the Wife from her Husband. The stroke of a Sword can separate a Body from the healthiest and strongest Head, nay without any such violence, the Head dies as well as the Body, and the Spirits that run in our Veins, are far from hindring the corruption of our Bodies, for they corrupt of themselves and vanish away. In short, the strictest Unions of Nature and Art are dissolved by time, so that all things under the Sun are Subject to vanity and unconstancy. But the Spirit of the Lord Jesus is the principle of an eternal Life, and the Seed of an uncorruptible glory, whosoever is united to him by this Spirit, nothing can separate him from Christ, neither Life nor Death, neither Hell nor the World, nor things present nor things to come. Therefore because our Blessed

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Saviour could Find nothing here upon Earth, nor amongst all the Creatures, worthy and able to represent this perfect and unseparable Union, he seeks an Image of it beyond all natural beings, in the holy Trinity, in that unchangeable Union, which was, which is, and which shall ever be between him and God the Father. As we may see in his excellent Prayer, *John 17. Father, I pray for them all which shall believe on me, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that they may be one even as we are one.* Banish therefore from your Souls all apprehensions and fears, O beleiving Souls, for all the Three persons of the most holy, most glorious and most wonderful Trinity are engaged for your Salvation, and to bring you to your eternal happiness. The Father by his infinite wisdom, hath found out a means to reconcile us unto himself, to satisfy his offended Justice, and to declare the riches of his unparallel'd Mercies. The Son hath purchased for us this great Salvation, by suffering the shameful Death of the Cross, and by spilling his most precious Blood for the forgiveness of our Sins; and the holy Spirit, by incorporating us into Jesus Christ, makes us partakers of the infinite Merits for his Sufferings, *Revel. 2.* That is the true Hyssop that sprinkles the Divine Blood of the Lamb, without spot or blemish, to cleanse our Souls. It is he that gives to our Souls the white Stone, where the new name of *Elect* and *Believers* is written, *Heb. 12.* which none knows but he that hath it. He gives us to eat of the hidden *Manna*, and of the food of Angels, *John 4.* which the World knoweth not. It is instead of a precious Ring or Jewel, by which our spiritual Bridegroom promiseth and confirms unto us his conjugal Faith. It is the Seal of the Living God, that Seals unto us the Covenant of Grace, and the promises of Glory and Happiness made unto us in the Gospel, as the Apostle himself tells us, *Eph. 2.* that now having believed the Gospel of our Salvation, *we have been Sealed by the holy Spirit of promise.* Therefore he exhorts

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us, Eph. 4. *not to grieve the holy Spirit of God, by whom we have been Sealed for the day of Redemption.* Finally, this is the Spirit that witnesseth with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God, *If we be children we are Heirs, Heirs of God, and joynt Heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. 8.

Think not, Christian Souls, that I labour to perswade you, that this holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus shall come and whisper in your ears, or cry unto you from within, that you are the Children of God, as the extravagant Quakers amongst us imagine; the Testimony that he gives to our Spirits, is a real and an effectual testimony, if I may so speak, for he regenerates us, and makes us become new Creatures, he gives us a more certain assurance of our adoption, than if he did declare from Heaven, *Thou art my Child, and thy name is written in the Book of Life.* As the Seal imprints its Image in the wax, thus the Spirit of the Lord Jesus imprints in our Souls the Image of Holiness and all Divine Vertues; now as the Figure that remains upon the Wax, makes us judge without dispute, what manner of Seal did print it; likewise when you find Gods Image imprinted in your Hearts, acknowledge the finger of God, and the Vertue of his holy Spirit to have been there; for none can have that blessed Image, but he must needs be the Child of God. The holy Spirit that gives it to our Souls, kindles in us the blessed flames of holy Love, and produceth in us Tounes of fire; he makes us speak to God with boldness as to our Father, and lift up our eyes to Heaven with joy and gladness, as to the place of our Inheritance. All the goods of this present life may be, nay will be lost at last, *Prov. 23.* Riches take wings and flie away like an Eagle, Honour vanisheth away, as a smoak carried away with the wind. Earthly Delights and Pleasures hast away as a Torrent or the waters of a River that slide along the Banks, and they end at last in a Sea of bitterness and sorrow. If by chance these vanities continue with the Worldlings, while they remain

on Earth, *Psa.* 49. they can continue no longer, for they cannot carry them beyond the Grave, their Riches and their Honours are Buried with them, and all their unfetled delights fly away with their Breath; but Death hath no power upon this Spirit of Life, which is our true Treasure, our glory and everlasting delight.

Moreover, the true and living Faith, that embraceth Jesus Christ our Saviour, shall cease, and hope that considers the advantages to come, shall one day be abolished. Whilst we are in this earthly Pilgrimage we walk by Faith, and not by sight, and while we are tost up and down upon this dangerous Sea of the World, *Heb.* 6. we have need of the Anchor of our Hope, and to expect with patience the fulfilling of that we hope for, *Rom.* 8. but when we shall come to our heavenly Country, we shall neither need a staff to walk with, nor a shield to defend us, and to quench the fiery darts of the Devil; when we shall be secure in the Haven of Eternity, we shall have no occasion to make use of this Anchor, for our hope shall be changed into a perfect Fruition. When we shall be in Paradise, we shall need no Wings to carry us up to God, but only to fly about his Throne, as the Seraphins. In short, we need no looking-glass to see the glory of God, for we shall behold him face to face. All that we believe at present without seeing, we shall then see and believe no more. But the Spirit of the Lord Jesus whom the World knoweth not and cannot receive; he is not given us for a time, but to dwell in us for ever. As the Flesh which our Lord took from us was never cast off, nor never shall; Thus the Spirit which he hath given us shall never be taken from us. The flesh which our Saviour united in the same person with the Divine Word, hath been glorified by this eternal Union, but the Spirit which he hath united to our Spirits, by this gracious Union, is the foundation of Glory, and of our eternal happiness.

The Spirit of Life is not only the Seal of the promises of God, but also the earnest of our uncorruptible inheritance

tance, reserved for us in Heaven. This is *St. Paul's Doctrine*, *Eph. i.* for when he had said, *you have been Sealed by the holy Spirit of promise*, he adds, *which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* Because this Divine Spirit is the Seal of the living God, he is the earnest of his Inheritance; for this heavenly Image that it imprints in our Souls, shall be part of that glory with which he will Crown us in his holy Paradise. Therefore the Wisdom that is various in every manner, doth not call this Spirit a Gage but an earnest; for although both be given as a confirmation of promises, and an assurance of their accomplishment, there is this difference, that Men commonly take back again the thing engaged, when that which is promised is done, but the earnest remains always, and is part of the sum to be paid. As therefore the earnest which is given is never taken away, but Men commonly add to it the remaining sum promised; likewise our Saviour never takes away from his Elect the Spirit of Adoption, which hath been once bestowed upon them, but he increaseth its Graces and Advantages, until he hath raised them to the highest glory and most Divine happiness which he hath promised.

It is in this occasion as with the Sun, which as soon as it appears upon our Horizon, increaseth the Light more and more, until he is mounted up to our Meridian, or as the Rivolets and Rivers, which the farther they run, the more they increase, until they discharge into the Sea; Therefore when our Lord and Saviour speaks of this Spirit of Grace, which such as believe in him receive, he tells the Jews, *John 8. He that believeth in me, Rivers of living Water shall flow from his Belly*, *John 4.* and to the Samaritan Woman he speak in this Language, *He that shall Drink of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the Water that I shall give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing to eternal life* This was sometimes shewn in a Vision to the Prophet Ezekiel, *Ezek. 47.*
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by the waters that ran down from the Sanctuary; for at the first they did reach no higher than the Prophets Ankle bone, afterwards they rise up to his knee, and then to his middle; at last they increased in such a manner, that they became a great Torrent, and a deep River which was not to be forded over, and which discharged it self into the Sea.

As *David* in the beginning of his Raign, commanded but one Tribe, but afterwards he enlarged the limits of his Kingdom over all the Tribes of *Israel*, that small portion of the Kingdom was not then taken from him, but only increased and became greater; thus it is with us, during this Life, we have small part of the Kingdom of Heaven intrusted in our hands, or if I may so say, we have now some Jewels of the uncorruptible Crown which is promised hereafter: This part shall not be taken from us, this bright beam of our future glory shall never be put out, but in the Life to come we shall possess as much of this Kingdom as we are able, and shall be cloathed with all that light and splendor of the Heavenly Glory.

But as there is no comparison never so just, but is faulty in some respects, there is no small difference in this, for the Tribe of *Juda* was the noblest and the richest part of the Kingdom of *Israel*, but that part which our Souls enjoy at present of the happiness and glory of the Kingdom of Heaven, is but as a drop of Water in comparison of the Ocean, or as a weak ray of light, in comparison of the Sun, 2 *Cor.* 12. Therefore the Apostle *St. Paul*, who had been ravished into the Third Heaven, and who knew better than any Man in the World, what were the Joys and Glories of Heaven, when he mentions this Spirit of Adoption that God sends into our hearts, he calls it, *Rom.* 8. *The first Fruits of his Spirit.* To teach us, that there is as vast a difference between the measure of the gifts and graces which we receive here below, and the overflowing abundance which we shall enjoy in Heaven, as between some few ears of Corn, and the whole harvest of a Field.

It is like the small quantity of Fruits which were brought to the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, compared to the great abundance of all the Land of *Canaan*. It is like some small crums of the Heavenly Bread, of which we shall have our fill in the Kingdom of God; as some small drops of that new Wine which we shall drink for ever in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Therefore, *believing Souls*, you may from hence conclude, that the approaches of Death ought not to scare nor fright you, because that you have within you the principles of a life everlasting, and the seeds of a glorious Immortality, which cannot be taken from you. Jesus Christ doth not only wait for you, and stretch out unto you his Arms, to receive you into his Rest, But he himself is also with you, and will render the passage easie and pleasant to this new World, where Justice and Righteousness dwell, *John 11*. He will make Miracles for your sake, and if you believe, you shall see the glory of God, *Joshua 3*. We do not only follow the footsteps of this Divine and real *Joshua*, but we pass with him, and he passeth with us, *Exod. 19*. We are not like the Children of *Israel*, that went through the River of *Jordan*, whilst the Priests held the Ark in the middle of the River, but we may be compared to the Priests themselves, *1 Pet. 2*. that did bear the Ark of the Covenant, and caused the Waters to return up to their Fountain again; for we are a Generation of Priests, and we bear in our Souls the Lord Jesus, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. In short, our Souls return to God the Fountain from whence they came; Let therefore that heavenly voice which was heard in the holy Land, sound in our ears, *Isa. 43*. *Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine, when thou passest through the Waters I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame*

Flame kindle upon thee, and say with David, When I should walk through the valley of the shadow of Death, I shall fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy Staff and thy Rod shall comfort me, Psal. 23.

It seems the Primitive Christians had a design to shew us this Truth by the Picture of a Giant-like man, wading through the Sea with a Staff in his hand, and a Child upon his Shoulder; for this Giant is the Emblem of a Christian, who lifts up his mind as high as Heaven; The Sea signifies the dangers of this World, and the fears of Death; The Staff represents Faith that keeps us up in our passage through Life and Death, upon which, when we lean, we Worship the living God of Heaven and Earth, and the Child is an Image of Christ; therefore he that bears him, is called *Christophorus*, that is, *He that bears Christ*. *Cesar* could not endure to see his Pilot tremble in a furious Storm at Sea, because he was in his Boat; we have far less reason to be afraid, seeing that we carry in our Hearts the great Emperor and Monarch of the World, the Hope and Comfort of *Israel*; *Cesar* was as much in danger as his Pilot to make Shipwrack, but our Lord Jesus Christ hath all the Winds at his Command. He can still the most disturbed Sea, and through the most grievous Death, he can cause us to pass and arrive to the safe Haven of an Eternal Rest, and of a most happy and glorious life.

When *David* shewed himself with a purpose to fight with *Goliath*, he spoke to this prodigious Philistian in this manner, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of Israel*. But you Christian Souls, when you are to encounter with Death, you may say to it, not only I come to thee in the name of him who Commands legions of Angels, and all the Armies of immortal Spirits, but I come to thee cloathed with his Armor, strengthened by his Holy Spirit, and assisted by him in person; for Jesus Christ

who hath overcome death for us, intends to overcome it by us. We are the living Stones which he hath chosen of his disinterested Mercy, to bring down that proud insulting Enemy, that causeth all Worldlings to tremble and cover their faces with Shame and Confusion, *Judg. 6.*

We have already seen a *Sampson* breaking in pieces, with a wonderful strength, the Cords with which he had been bound by the Philistians, and tearing also the Body of a young Lion, in which he found some few days after, Honey, most pleasant to his taste. It will be much easier for us, when we shall be strengthened with the *Divine Vertue* of the Lord Jesus, of whom *Sampson* was but a Type, to tear in pieces all the Cords and Chains of Death. We shall rent in pieces the Body of this old Lion, and when we shall search into his Bowels with a serious and repeated meditation, we shall find the sweetest and most ravishing Comforts.

As when the Prophet *Elias* was carried up to Heaven in a fiery Charriot, he let fall his Cloak with which *Elisha* separated the Waters of *Jordan*, so that he passed through the River on foot. Likewise our Saviour Jesus Christ being ascended up above the Clouds, to the Throne of his Glory, he hath left us the precious Cloak of his Righteousness, he hath granted us his Holy Spirit, that we might pass through the turbulent Waves of this tempestuous Sea of the World, by its Divine Vertue, and that through death we might enter into immortal Life.

And as the death of our Lord Jesus Christ separated his Soul from his Body, although both his innocent Soul and Holy Body remained always united personally to his Divinity. In the same manner the Believers death disunites, for a time, his Soul from his Body, but it can never separate it from the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, that is the Soul of our Souls, and such an Holy Flame, that it can never be extinguished.

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When the High Priest of the Jews put off his Priestly Garments, he cast off at the same time his Breastplate where the names of the twelve Tribes were engraven, *Exod.* 20. Not only our names are writtin in the Lamb's Book of Life, not only our Pictures are printed upon the Palms of his hands with the Blood of the Covenant, but we be as a Signet upon his Heart, *Cant.* 8. so that we cannot be separated from him no more than his heart can be taken from him ; his Love is stronger than Death, and his embraces are embraces of Love.

Ruth promised to *Naomi*, that Death alone should be able to separate them, *Ruth.* 1 But on the contrary, we may tell our Lord and Saviour, who is as our Father, Brother, and Husband, not only death shall never be able to separate us, but it shall rather bring us nearer unto thee, and cause us to rest in thy bosom, where we shall be for ever satisfied with thine Heavenly delights. Christians, you need not fear Death, for you are not to be wounded by all its Darts, for you have been dipt in the River that springs to Eternal Life. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus that is in you, is the Spirit of Life, the begininig of Immortality, and the only Spring of Eternal Glory and Happiness. Seeing that the breath of the Prophet *Elias* raised a dead Body to life, the Spirit and the Breath of the Father, and of the Son, will be able to keep your Spiritual life from decaying ; unless it be in Death's power to stop the breath of the Almighty, unless it be able to limit the beams of Light and Glory that came from his Divine countenance ; unless it can cause the Rivers of living water that spring out of his Throne to cease and dry up ; It is not possible that it should cause us to perish, and render us miserable. Therefore you are certain of your Eternal Happiness, while Jesus Christ shall be the Author and Well-Spring of Light, Life, Glory, and Immortality ; and that his Holy Spirit shall be victorious over Death and

Hell ; and you may sing with *David*, *I shall not dye, but live and declare the Works of the Lord*, Psal. 118.

You be not only sure of this Glory and Eternal Happiness ; and you be not only enter'd into possession of it by your Faith and Hope, but you begin already to enjoy it and its First-Fruits ; for he that believes in Jesus Christ, is past from Death to Life ; and whosoever hath the Son of God hath Eternal Life. As the prophet *Moses*, when he was in the Wilderness, did not only see a far off the *Land of Promise*, but he tasted of its delicious Fruits ; Thus we don't only behold afar off with the Eye of Faith, our Celestial Inheritance, but we taste at present, and relish some of its blessed Delights. And as the Fruits brought by the Spies, were the same and like unto them that the Children of *Israel* did eat in the *Promised Land* ; In like manner, the Fruits that we relish in the Wilderness of this World, are Fruits of the Tree of Life, with which we shall be fully satisfied in Heaven ; for the Grace that God bestows upon us here below by his Divine Spirit, is the beginning of the Glory, with which he shall Crown us above. The same Light that shines upon our Souls on Earth, shall shine much more for ever in Heaven. But whereas we look upon it at present, as it were through a black mist with much imperfection, then we shall see it clearly without Vail or Darknes. The same Holiness that adorns, at present, our Souls, shall be their Ornament and Glory ; then it shall appear without spot or blemish. That same peace of Conscience that preserves our Hearts and Sences, shall Crown us above, it shall be without the least disturbance. In short, the same Jesus that is conceived in our Hearts, and that is formed and grows in us by degrees, shall then appear in a perfect Stature, that shall want no more increase.

As it is with the Sea, it enters into the Rivers before the Rivers can run to the Sea, in like manner God comes to us before we go to him, and Heaven enters

ters into our Souls before we can enter into Heaven.

Aged *Simeon* waited patiently for Death ; but as soon as he had seen the Saviour of the World, and embraced him, he ran to meet Death ; he thought upon nothing but his latter end, therefore he prayed most earnestly, to receive him into his Glorious Rest. O Christian Soul, how shouldest thou dispose and prepare thyself to dye, seeing thou beholdest, with the Eyes of Faith, this Blessed Redeemer, not wrapped up in Swathing Cloaths, but Crowned with an infinite Glory and Light ; He is not in thine Arms, but he lodges in thine Heart ; thou hast not received him, to return or part with him again, but to be united unto him for ever, and to be incorporated into his mystical Body. Seeing therefore that Death brings thee nearer to thy Redeemer, perfects this Blessed Union, and casts thee into the very Fountain of Life, instead of being frightened at her, and grieved when it comes to thee, thou shouldest then rejoyce and be transported above measure with gladness ; we should meet this Death with a chearful countenance ; I mean, that we should meet the Lord Jesus, this merciful Prince of Life, who having vouchsafed unto thee the sight of his Salvation, intends to receive thee into his Rest, and Eternal and Glorious Peace that Reigns above in Heaven.

A Prayer and Meditation of a Christian Soul that strengthens its self against the fears of Death, by considering our strict and unseparable Union with Jesus Christ, by his Holy Spirit, and the First-Fruits in us, of our Blessed Immortality.

O *Mighty and Merciful Lord, who art the Son of Righteousness, and the Fountain of Living Water, drive away from me the dark shadows of death, and quench all the Fires that it kindles in my Soul; thou art not only dead for me, but thou art pleased to live in me, that I might one day live for ever with thee. Thou hast of thy pure Mercy chosen me for thy Child, and hast made me a Member of thy Mystical Body, Flesh of thy Flesh, Bone of thy Bone, and caused me to be partaker of thine Holy Spirit. God hath not given thee the Spirit by measure, that out of thy fulness we might receive Grace for Grace. By the means of this Blessed and infinite Spirit that rests in my my Soul, I am united unto thee in a more perfect manner than the Tree is to the root that bears it, or the Child to its Mother that nourisheth it in her Womb, or the Members of the Humane Body, to the Head that gives them Life. Ties that unite me unto thee, O Glorious Saviour, are more unchangeable than the Heavens and the Earth, as nothing can pluck me out of thine Hands, there is nothing can separate me from thine Heart. Whether I live or dye, I am thine, my Lord and my God, and nothing can alter thine affection for me. Death can take me out of the World, and carry me out of the embraces of my dearest friends; but it can never separate me from thine Holy Spirit, the Soul of my Soul, and the Light of my Life, which cannot be put out by all the envious Blasts and Storms of the Prince of Darkness; this Holy Spirit will bring me to be-*
hold

hold thy Face, to rest in thy Bosom, and unite me unto thee for ever. To whom shall I go? thou hast the words of Eternal life, and thou art the inexhaustible Fountain; Thou art my Hope and my Treasure, my Glory, and mine only Happiness. O faithful and unquestionable Witness, I should be worse than an Infidel if I did call in question my future Salvation and Glory, seeing the Father hath not spared thee for me, although thou art his only and beloved Son, the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person. Seeing that thou, O merciful Lord, hast willingly suffered the most shameful death of the Cross, and spilt thy precious Blood to wash away all my sins, and satisfy for my crimes; and seeing that thine Holy Spirit is come into my Heart, to make me a partaker of that precious Blood, and Seal me for the day of Redemption. O Glorious Spirit of my Saviour, that rests upon me; when I should be able to speak the Language of Angels, I could not sufficiently express the wonderful operations that thou dost produce in my Soul: thou kindlest in me such Heavenly Flames as never go out, but are always alive, as the fire of thine Altar; Thou formest in me a white stone, where a new Name is written, which no man knows but he that receives it; Thou givest me to eat of that hidden Manna, of that Food of Angels that the World knoweth not: Thou witnesseth with my Spirit, that I am a Child of God, an Heir of God, and a joynt Heir with Jesus Christ the King of Kings. Thou dost not only Seal unto me the pardon of all my Sins, but thou dost also purify my Conscience from all dead Works to serve the living God; Thou causest me to cry out Abba Father, and imprintest in my Heart the Glorious Image of my Heavenly Father; Thou art the Seal of my Adoption, the earnest of mine uncorruptible Inheritance prepared for me in Heaven; Thou hast given me the infallible assurances of a Glorious and Eternal Life, and begun it already in my Soul, granting to me its First-Fruits; Thou causest me to behold the Sunshine of thy Grace, and makest it to give Light in mine Understanding; Thou dost not only vouchsafe unto me, the

labour of beholding from this Valley of Tears thine Heavenly Canaan, but thou causest me to taste of its Fruits; I am not yet come to the Fountain of Waters that spring forth to Eternal Life, but I feel the streams and the Rivers that run in my Soul; I am not yet come to thine Holy Paradise, but thou hast caused Paradise to be in me; Thou hast given unto me an unspeakable and glorious Joy, and hast bestowed upon me the Peace of God that passeth all understanding. O living and quickening Spirit unknown to the World; thou strengthenest me in such a manner that death will never be able to fright me; Thou hast united me to thy self by an unseparable Union, O Prince of Life, and hast put in me a Seed of Immortality, an Infallible Principle of Glory, and a source of unspeakable Happiness; Thou art in me to dwell with me for ever, therefore thou shalt fill up the measure of thy most signal Favours. My Faith, by thy Divine assistance, hath spied out the Kingdom prepared for us from the beginning of the World; and shortly I shall see, with mine Eyes, the unexpressible Beauties of that Celestial Countrey, that flows with the Milk of the purest and sincerest Joys, and with the Honey of the sweetest and most ravishing Comforts; thou hast sent a fore-taste of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, but I shall come into thine Heavenly Paradise; I shall ever have my fill of those delicious Fruits: Now thou hast caused some drops of the dew of Heaven to fall upon mine Heart, but then thou wilt make me drink of the Rivers of thy Divine Pleasures. At present, in my painful passage through this vally of Tears, in the midst of my Groans and Tears, I may gather some Herbs, but when I shall come to my Heavenly Countrey, I shall reap my Handsfull with Songs of Joy. Here upon Earth I see God as in a Glass obscurely, but in Heaven I shall behold him face to face, and I shall be satisfied with his likeness. My Lord and my God, who by the infinite Merits of thy sufferings hast purchased for us this Spirit of Life, and who hast given to my Soul such an Authentick Seal of my Salvation, and such a precious earnest of thine
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Eternal Bliss. I feel in me the motions and endeavours of this New Man that Essays to leave this Body of Darknes and Death, to enter into the Light of the Living. Lord Jesus, seeing thou hast made me partaker of the Spirit of thy Grace, enlightned my Soul with thy Divine Knowledg, and caused me to know the way of Life; Seeing that thou hast given me to taste of the Heavenly Gift of the Powers of the life to come; Seeing that thou hast vouchsafed to me the First-Fruits of thy Glory, and that I already feel Heaven in my Soul; Seeing that I behold thee with the Eyes of my Faith, that I embrace thee with all my affections, and that thou dwellest in my Heart, perfect in me the work of thy Grace, and bring me at last to thine Eternal Glory, Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation, Amen.

CHAP. XX.

The eighth Consolation, is to consider, that Death frees and delivers us from all the Evils that are in the World, and that we daily suffer.

THere are certain Pictures with two Faces, the one represents most ugly Features, and the other beautiful and pleasant things; This is the true Emblem of Death; for it may be painted with a fearful Face, a lean Body, and iron Hands, that ravish from us our Goods and our Honours, and that divide our Persons, dragging our bodies into a loathsome Sepulcher; If we look upon Death in this manner, we can do nothing less but tremble and fear; We may also look upon it as a powerful Deliverer, that unlooseth

eth all our Fetters, breaks our Chains to pieces, lifts up our Souls to the highest Glory and Happiness; If we consider thus, there is nothing more lovely than Death, and nothing more to be desired.

I have hitherto endeavoured to shew how a Believer shall strengthen and comfort himself against the fears of Death; but now I shall say something more; with Heavens assistance, I shall labour to prove, not only that Death is to be expected without apprehension, but to be received with an Holy Joy; That it is not at all dreadful, but rather it is to be earnestly desired; I shall no longer give, to speak right, any Consolations against the fears of Death, for I hope to make it plain, that Death it self is to be looked upon as the greatest Consolation and Comforter.

That I may attain unto mine end, I shall shew as in a Picture, a short view of all the dreadful miseries, of which Death delivers us, and then I shall endeavour to paint out in the brightest Colours, or rather I shall chaulk out unto you, the Blessedness and Glories into which it ushers us.

Man's Life and Misery, are Twin-Sisters that are born at the same time, and owned *Adam* for their First Father; they dye together at the same instant in true Believers. We all know that Man begins his Life weeping and crying, and ends it with sighs and Groans; We come into the World all covered with Blood, and we go out all over with a cold Sweat. If the Child cries not as soon as it is born, we judge that it is dead; and when the sick Body ceaseth to groan and sigh, we say that he is past hopes; so that as our crying is a token of Life, and the end of thy sighs, is likewise an infallible sign of thy Death; Wretched Man! how miserable is thy condition? thy best friends rejoyce at thy crying, and they weep and lament, when thou ceasest to sigh and groan.

All the rest of thy time between thy Cradle and thy Grave is no happier; it is but a continued Chain of Misery, a mixture of pains, a succession of evils, and a Sea of bitterness. As one Wave falls upon the back of another, one evil is no sooner gone, but another meets and threatens us; one depth calleth another, and all manner of Flouds and Storms pass over our Heads, *Job 5.* As the Sparks rise out of the Fire to fly up and down, Man is born for Misery and Pain; and as the wisest of Kings speaks, *His days are nothing but pain, and his employment but trouble, in the night his Heart resteth not, Eccles. 3.* There are scarce any dwellings, but Messengers of ill news do sometimes come to them as they did to that of *Job, Job 1.*

By God's unchangeable order and appointment, the days succeed the nights, and divide the year into two equal parts; for if the nights are longer in one season, so much the shorter are they in another; but the nights of our afflictions are so long, that they seem to last several Ages; whereas the days of our prosperity are so short, that they are gone in a moment; so that we may justly say with the Prophet *Moses, The best of our days are but labour and sorrow, so soon doth our life pass away, and we are gone, Psal. 90.* It is as easie a task to number the Stars of the Firmament, and to reckon up the grains of Sand upon the Sea shore, as to make an exact enumeration of all the evils that happens to us as Men belonging to a civil Society, or as Members of God's Church and his adopted Children; therefore old *Jacob* had cause to complain that the years of his life had been short and evil, but ours are so evil that they cannot be too short.

I should compose many Volumes, if I should undertake to describe perfectly all the infirmities and diseases that undermine the Body, all the cutting pains and cruel tortures that torment and rack us.

The most languishing sicknesses, and the most violent pains that afflict and disturb this poor Body, are nothing in comparison of the excessive sadness and mortal anguish that seize upon our Souls, and fill them full of Gall and Bitterness. I think that there is no man upon Earth, that can boast of having pass'd but one day without some displeasure, either inward or outward; for we either feel present evils that strike through our Hearts, as so many Darts, or the remembrance of former Grievs that trouble us, or else the fear of future mischances vex and fret us; I may justly say, that the Devil is not so cruel to himself, as we are to our own persons; for this evil Spirit cares not to be tormented before the time, whereas we anticipate the evils by unquiet apprehensions, and wilful vexations entertained in our mind. The fear of Misery makes us far more miserable, and the apprehension of an imaginary evil, causeth us to resent a real affliction, and an unfeigned torment.

When we consider any Mans Life, we only look upon that which appears most delightful and pleasant; we consider the Nobility of his Blood, the variety of his Pleasures, the greatness of his Riches, the glory of his Offices and Victories, and the pomp of his Triumphs; but scarce is there any man that takes notice of his miseries and afflictions; or if some be noted, they are but such as are too obvious to every man's Eye; as the publick affronts and disgraces, the loss of a Battel, the degradation from an Office, Banishments, Imprisonments, and such like unhappy afflictions; but besides these calamities which are visible to all the World, and the common motives of the condoling lamentations of our friends, there are many secret evils that be far more painful; our dearest Relations discover not always our most sensible wounds, to puor into them an healing Balm; they seek not into our deepest sorrows, nor
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do they dream of applying to our souls, the most proper Comforts.

When ye behold Stage-Players capring upon a Theatre, speaking as big as Kings and Princes, you seldom think, that under their Magnificent and Glorious Attire, they hide many filthy Rags, and perhaps some incummodious Vermin that stings them to the quick. Likewise, when you cast your Eyes upon Riches, Glory, Pomp and Magnificence of Worldly Men, you don't discover and see the Canker-worm that gnaws their Hearts, and the secret Fire that devours their Souls. Some there be that laugh in publick before company, and appear with a merry countenance, who are full of despair, and in private, tear off their Hair, sigh, and pour forth abundance of Tears. Some feed themselves before the World with the most delicious Meats, and Drink the rarest Wines, but inwardly they are glutted with poison and gaul. This was the consideration of the wisest of Kings, when he writ this Sentence, *I have said of laughter, it is mad, and of gladness, what profiteeth it?* Eccles. 2.

As Poverty and a mean Estate are always accompanied with a grievous Train of fretful sorrows and cares, Likewise, Riches and Honours are never without Fears and Disturbances; and as there is no Flame never so pure, but sends up a Smoak; nor a Rose so beautiful, but hath its prickles; so there is no condition in the World so beautiful and glorious, nor any prosperity so well flourishing, but hath its troubles and sharp Thorns. Every Man upon Earth (without exception) bears his Cross, or hath a grievous Thorn in his side. The Moth sticks to the richest Stuffs, and the Worm gets-into the heart of the richest Flowers and Fruits; and the Thunderbolt strikes down the loftiest Oaks, the highest Steeples, and the most glorious Palaces. Likewise, Care and Grief, commonly eat up the flower of the great Prosperities, and the noblest Dignities are
often

often subject to the strangest alterations, and to the most terrible downfalls. The richest Crowns cast all their splendor and glory outwardly, but inwardly they are felt to be weighty upon the Heads of such as bear them. A great Prince found his Diadem so burdensom and unsufferable, that he cried out, *O Crown! if thy weight were well known, none would lift thee up from the ground.* It is not without good cause, that such as are passionate for the World, and inclinable to the delights of the Flesh, are in a continual fear and dread, for they be exposed to most imminent dangers; if their Eyes were but open, they should see a naked Sword always hanging by a small thread over their Heads. As in that glorious Statue which *Nebuchadnezzar* saw in his dream, the Head that was of pure Gold, was as easily broken as the Earthen feet, and became as light as Chaff which the Wind carries away. Likewise, the most Honourable, the Richest, and the most Glorious Estate, is as well subject to the same mischances, as the Lowest, the Poorest, and the most Wretched; where are any Riches and Treasuries that are not succeeded by Poverty? Where rides that Pride and Pomp that hath not shame to attend it? Is there any grandeur in the Age not subject to the furious blasts of Envy? Where is that lighted Taper that a Whirlwind and a storm of Rain cannot put out? *Christian Souls*, take good notice of the Fruits which the World gives to its Servants and Children, and you shall find that they are well like to certain Apples of *America*, of an excellent beauty, and of a sweet Smell; and nevertheless they are full of the rankest poison, that kills infallibly, such as unadvisedly eat them. There is no sweetness so great upon Earth, but hath a mixture of bitter; nor joy so pure and lasting, but is often interrupted with Sighs and Tears. The rarest Pleasures have a sad countenance and a groaning Accent; our Hearts, in the midst of laughter, feel an oppression, and our joy is accompa-

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nied with sorrow ; Therefore when the most experienced of all former Princes had taken an exact notice of all things under the Sun, and tasted all the delights of Life, he concludes with this confession, *That all things under the Sun are nothing but vanity and vexation of Spirit.*

It is not needful that I should make here an exact, and a particular description of all the sad and troublesome accidents of this life, that are able to turn the most flourishing Estate upside-down. Remember, ingenious Reader, to run over carefully the whole course of thy life and examine in the just Scales of the Sanctuary, all the good and evil things which thou hast found by experience. In one put all thy satisfactions of thy Flesh, and whatsoever brings thee any advantage or content ; and put in the other all thy fretful Cares, Griefs, Displeasures, and Disgraces. If thy Evils and Miseries do not weigh down the Ballance, thou mayest esteem it a wonder and a miracle. Thou hast no cause to boast of thine Earthly Happiness. Mind well the speech of *Solon*, one of the seven Wise Men of *Greece*, to *Cresus*, a Prince who prided in his Riches and Prosperity, *That none could be esteemed happy before his latter end and the hour of his death.* Consider, that some who have attained to a greater degree of Happiness than thou hast, have fallen into a most wretched Estate on a suddain. He that did lately swim in Wealth and Plenty, is reduc'd oft-times to the lowest Poverty. He that had whole Armies at his Command, is sometimes forsaken of all the World. He that had Princes for his Subjects, is often forced to obey a Slave. Some that fed daintily, are glad to eat at present the Bread of Affliction, and to quench their thirst with tears. Some that lately flourished in gorgeous Apparel, in Palaces bedecked with Gold and Silver, are now rotting in a loathsome Dungeon. Some are dragg'd from their most glorious Dwellings, to the most infamous

infamous Death. The richest and noblest Crowns have not protected the wisest Heads.

When it should be possible to go through this life without feeling any alteration in thine health, nor suffering any loss of Goods, nor change of thy happy condition, which is as rare a thing to be found, as the strange Bird called a *Phenix*. Hast thou no Children, Parents, nor Friends whom thou lovest, or oughtest to love tenderly? are those Persons without any affliction? and is it not possible that it should seize upon them? certainly, unless thou hast an Heart as unsensible as the Marble and the Steel; unless thou hast renounced all natural affections, thou must needs be moved with these evils and disgraces that happen to them in their life; and when Death snatcheth them away, it must needs tear thy very Heart, and rent thy Bowels.

But if it should happen, which is not to be believed, that nothing hath ever afflicted thee in thine own Person, or in that of thy Friends; and if all such as are related to them, live in perfect and flourishing prosperity, like unto those Countreys of the other World, that are always covered with Flowers and Fruits; cast thine Eyes upon the Earth, and thou shalt there behold so many evils and calamities, that if thou hast any common sense of Humanity, thou shalt have cause to weep. God commanded the Prophet *Jeremiah*, to deliver the Cup of his Wrath to several People, one after another, but now it seems that he delivers this Cup to them all at once; for where is that People or Nation that may boast of never having drunk of it, and of not being in danger of drinking? some have drunk it up to the very dregs, others drink it by degrees; others have this bitter Cup brought to their Lips.

Our Saviour causeth his beloved Disciple to see two Angels, that had each of them in his hand a sharp
Sickle

Sickle to reap the Corn, and gather the Grapes, *Revel.* 14. Afterwards he discover'd to him seven more, that had in their Hands Golden Viols, full of the wrath of God, which they poured upon the Inhabitants of the World, to plague and punish them, *Revel.* 15. But at present, the Holy Angels appear in Troops and Legions, to cut off Mankind, and to transport them to the Wine-press of God's Eternal Vengeance. The Wrath of God seems no more to be measured out by Viols, nor by Cups, but it appears as a great River, and a bottomless Sea, that swells, and runs over the Shore and the Banks. In short, the deluge of Evils that covers the face of the Earth, is so universal, that the Doves, I mean the innocent and meek Souls that love Peace and Rest, can find no place to fix and settle their Feet.

If thou hast any Christian Zeal and Charity to assist thy Sence of Humanity, thou canst not possibly behold with unconcern'd Affections; the despicable and dangerous Estate of Christ's Church on Earth; for it is like Noah's Ark in the midst of the roaring Waves; Like the burning Bush of Mount Oreb, surrounded with Flames; Like the Prophet Daniel, in the Lion's Den, and like his companions in the fiery Furnace, so that it may justly speak in the same manner as the antient Jerusalem, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger, Lam. 1.* O Blest Church of God, thou hast felt persecution from thine Infancy, until now, *Psal. 119.* Prepare therefore thy self to suffer much more in this decay, and old age of the World, for the Devil will persecute thee with so much the more fury and violence, because he knows that he hath but a short time, and that he must be soon shut up in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

In this case, Grief is not only lawful, but commanded, for God requires us to put on Sackcloth and Ashes, *Isa. 12.*

He desires that we should be sick for the troubles of *Joseph*, *Amos* 6. That we should weep with them that weep, *Rom.* 12. That we should remember the Prisoners, as if we were Prisoners with them; and that we should suffer with them that were tormented, as being members of one Body, *Heb.* 12. We have good reason to apply to the World, and to the Worldlings, *David's* saying, *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesek, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar, my Soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace*, *Psal.* 120. *Jeremiah* had never so much cause as we to lament, and to wish that his Head were dissolved into Water, his Eyes were a fountain of Tears to weep day and night, *Fer.* 9. And the Prophet *Isaiah* had never so much reason to cry out in the displeasure of his Soul, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the Daughter of my People*, *Isa.* 22.

It is not therefore without good cause, that the Preacher acquaints us, *That the day of Death is far better than the day of our Birth*; for our Birth causeth us to weep, and Death wipes off all Tears from our Eyes; our Birth discovers that large Theatre upon which all Worldly Tragedies are acted; Death draws the Curtain, puts a period to all such bloody Spectacles; Our Birth casts us into the Fire and Water of divers afflictions; and Death draws us out of the Flames and Bitterness. Finally, seeing that our Life is but a Chain of Misery, and that Death breaks in peices the last link; seeing that our Life is but a continual Fighting, and that Death alone is the Victory; It is most certain, that this Death is not to be feared as an evil and an enemy, but it is rather to be desired as a good Friend, and a Blessing. It is reported of the *Thracians*, that they buried their dead with expressions of joy; and the Inhabitants of the fortunate Islands did Sing and Dance at the Funerals of their dearest Friends. I don't commend these foolish examples of these extravagant and barbarous People,

People, who were without Hope and without God in the World; such cannot fear Death too much, for if it freed them from some present and light evils, it casts them into an Abyſs of exceſſive torments; Death is an Happineſs, it brings with it a ſolid Comfort and Joy, but it is when we dye in God's Favour, and in the Faith of our Lord Jeſus; God hath ſufficiently declared the Happineſs and Pleaſure of his Childrens Death, for he doth often abridge the days of thoſe whom he favours and eſteems. Becauſe he had ſeen ſome good thing in the perſon of *Abijah*, the eldeſt Son of *Jeroboam*, King of *Iſrael*, he took him away in the flower of his Age, *1 Kings 14*. He granted the ſame favour to *Jofias*, King of *Judea*, one of the moſt Religious Princes of the World, for he had declared to him by *Hulda* the Prophetess, *Behold, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy Grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil which I will bring upon this place, 2 Kings 22*. It is not to be doubted, but that ſuch are moſt happy, as dye in the Lord, and reſt from their Labours; but I judge ſuch happy in a twofold manner, as Dye, or rather ceaſe from Dying in ſuch miſerable times, ſo full of confuſion and diſorder.

Would not you laugh at a Workman that ſhould grieve when his Task is ended, and his Labour finiſhed? or at a Wayfaring Man, that ſhould lament to ſee the end of his painful journey through Prickles and Thorns, and the ſcorching heat of the Sun, or the unſufferable cold of the Winter? Or would you not wonder at one that ſhould vex himſelf, when he is ſafely arrived in the Haven, eſcaped the Waves of a tempeſtuous Sea, and in a ſhelter from the Storms? Wretched Man! thou art far more fooliſh and extravagant, than thoſe of whom we ſpeak; for the moſt painful Labours of a Workman, the moſt grievous wearineſs of a tedious journey, and the ſwelling Waves

of a troubled Sea, are nothing in comparison of the Labours, Misery and troubles of this languishing Life. You would, doubtless, esteem it a very great folly and madness in a prisoner, to be sorry of being delivered out of his noisome Dungeon; or in a Gally-Slave, to be angry when he is to be loos'd from his Chains; or in an offender, to vex when he is freed from his Torments. What think ye? is there less madness and extravagancy in you, when ye are grieved to see Death, freeing your Souls from this miserable Body, where it is imprison'd, withdrawing it from the painful employments of this unhappy Age, more grievous and intolerable than that of the Gally-slaves, and discharging you from the troubles of the Soul, far more painful, than the most unsufferable tortures of the Body? no, no, Death that thou dreatest so much, is not the death of the faithful, but the end of his miseries, and the last period of all his torments, *Gen. 8.* *Noah*, when he went out of the Ark that stopt upon Mount *Ararat*, had never so much cause to praise God, and to offer unto him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, as we have, when he is pleased to cause us to see the end of the Inundation of so many evils and calamities, and to make this floating Life, or this living Death, to stop upon Mount *Sion*.

The Children of *Israel* sung Songs of Thanksgiving, when they came out of *Egypt*, and saw themselves deliver'd out of a bitter and painful Bondage; where they had been employed in gathering up Stubble, and burning Brick; but we have much more cause to rejoyce and to sing Songs of Praise, when Death takes us out of the World, where we suffer a kind of bondage, labouring in vain employments, and enduring the scorching heat of many afflictions that consume us. Thou findest fault with some of the unconstant people that murmured to return again into *Egypt*, when they were upon the borders of the promised Land, but rather

ther find fault with thine own filthy flesh; if it offers to murmur and revolt, when thou art at the entrance of thy Celestial *Canaan*; *Joseph* rejoyced when the King of *Egypt* sent for him out of prison, *Gen.* 41. And have we not cause to be joyful, when God sends for our Souls out of the World, and causeth them to go out of their Bodies, which to them is a kind of a Dungeon.

If therefore we can speak without impatient murmuring; I conceive we have as good reason as *Jonas*, to say, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me, for it is better for me to dye than to live, *Jonas* 4. Or as the Prophet *Eliás*, It is enough, Lord, take away my life, *1 Kings* 19. Such a Soul, may in an Holy transport, safely speak in the language of *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, Bring my Soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name, the righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal bountifully with me, *Psal.* 141.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian who comforts himself with the Consideration, that Death delivers us from all evils which are so numerous in the World, and which so often assault us.

O Glorious Prince of my Salvation ! thou hast hitherto strengthened me against all fears of Death ; but now I beseech thee with all mine Heart, to give me Grace, that Death may not terrify and afflict me, but also fill me full of Joy and Comfort. Suffer me not to be like thy People Israel, when they had forgotten their hard and cruel Bondage ; when they thought upon the Pleasures and Plenty of Egypt, they did mutiny to return thither again, when they were upon the borders of Canaan. Give me Grace, O my God, to blot out of my Soul the fancy for the vain delights of the World, and for the deceitful Pleasures of this wretched Flesh. Let me have always in my mind the Labours, the Pains and Troubles of this miserable Life, that I may continually look upon Death in the same manner as the Workman looks upon the end of his days work ; As the Wayfaring man looks upon the end of his Journey ; and as the Traveller looks upon the Haven of his last Rest. Let me often meditate upon these horrible confusions that are this day in the World, the Deluge of all manner of Evils that cover the face of the Earth, the Rivers and Streams of Blood that is shed, the Fires and the Swords that devour so many. Let me never forget the sad and lamentable state of thy poor Church, that is like a small Boat upon the Waves of the Sea ; always in danger of sinking, if thou didst not still the Winds, and Command the roaring Storms ; it is in the World

World, as it were in a flaming Furnace, ready to be consumed, if thou didst not withdraw from thence the furious heat; Or in the midst of Lions that would soon devour it, if thou didst not close their Jaws. O my God, when wilt thou shut mine Eyes, that I may not see so many Tragical appearances? When wilt thou stretch out unto me from above thine Hand, to draw me out of this Abyss of Wickedness? When wilt thou send down unto me thine Holy Angels, to carry me out of this grievous burning? When is it that I shall see no more the Nations drunk with the Wine of thy Fury; and thy Holy Church stooping under the heavy weight of its Cross? When shall I hear no more the bitter complaints of thy Spouse, the lamentations of thy Children, the groans of thy Servants, the sighs of the Prisoners, and the mournings of thine Inheritance? O Heavenly Father, my only Hope, and my All! When wilt thou loose me from this Chain of Misery? When wilt thou carry me above the reach of the Storms and Tempests of this troublesome Sea? When shall the cares and griefs cease to devour my Soul? and when shall my Body no more be subject to Sicknes and Pain, and Torments? O Lord, thou knowest all things; thou seest that I am in the World as in a Prison, and that my Soul is in this wretched Body as in a woful Dungeon. Cause therefore thine Heavenly Light to shine upon me thy Servant; strike me with thy merciful Hand, and awake me out of my dumpish and sottish Humour; cause all my Chains to fall off, and open unto me the Gates of this black Prison, that I may go out and follow willingly the steps of that good Angel, that intends to take me out of this miserable Captivity, and secure me for ever from the malicious designs of Satan and the World, that endeavour to destroy me and triumph over my Misery. When I shall be in the streets of thine Heavenly Jerusalem, I shall then know for certain, that thou hast delivered me; I shall then praise thy wonderful Works

in the Company and Church of the First-born, that re-joyce in Heaven, where the former miseries shall no more be remembred, where there shall be neither Crying nor Pain; where we shall not be tormented with Hunger and Thirst, and where no Affliction shall disturb us, for the Lamb that is in the midst of the Throne shall feed and lead us to the Fountains of living Water, where he shall wipe away all Tears from our Eyes, Amen.

CHAP

C H A P. XXI.

The ninth Consolation, Death shall deliver us from Sin, which we may see Reigning in the World, and from the Reliques of our Corruption.

WHen God sent Angels from Heaven to lead Lot out of Sodom, and to draw him out of the Flames with which he intended to destroy that abominable City; this good Man's Wife could not but look back; but she was in that very moment sufficiently punished, for she was turned into a Pillar of Salt. The Emblem of that Holy Prudence that this example recommends to posterity; The cause of this unhappy Womans breaking the Angels express Command, was her consideration of the Riches, Plenty, and Pleasures of that Countrey which she had left, not thinking upon the baseness, filth, and abominable Vices that brought God's Wrath and Vengeance upon the unworthy Inhabitants: Likwise, when God intends to take us out of the World, and to secure us from the fence of his dreadful judgements; that which causeth us to look back, and hinders us from following the Angels that God sends unto us, to lead us up to the Mount of our Salvation; are our thoughts and affections for the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of this wretched World; whereas we should then fix our minds upon the sins that govern here below, wherewith we are defiled, whilst we remain in this corrupted Flesh.

Christian Souls, will you prepare your selves to go to God? and do you wish that Death would comfort and rejoyce your Hearts, instead of afflicting them? Cast your Eyes upon those dreadful Vices that are so usual, under which, the whole Creation groans, as under an heavy

heavy burden. O good God, in what age are we born? an age like that of *Noah*, for all the Earth hath corrupted its ways, *Gen. 6.* nothing but a deluge of Fire is able to purge it. There was never more Injustice, more Perfidiousness, Treachery, Debauchery, Insolency, and Envy; never more Vanity, Luxury, Pride, Cruelty, Blasphemies, Impiety, and Atheism; we may justly apply to our days, that which the Prophet *Hosea* said of the corruption of his time, *There is no Truth, no Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land; there is nothing but Swearing, Lying, Killing, Stealing, and committing Adultery; they break out, and blood toucheth blood, Hof. 4.* Therefore we have good cause to make *David's* Prayer, *Help Lord, for the Godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the Children of Men. They speak vanity, every one with his neighbour, with flattering Lips, and with a double Heart do they speak, Psal. 12.* O wicked World, a World overflowing with Iniquity, a sink of Impurity, a burning Furnace, heated with the impure flames of the bottomless Pit, and choakt with the smoak of Hell. But sin reigns not only in this wretched World, but it defaces also the Church of God, and causeth most fearful disorders amongst those that bear the Glorious name of *Christians*; they were anti-ently to be discerned from the rest of the World, by their Speech, Conversation, and Behaviour; but the Devil hath wonderfully debauched them, he hath blotted out God's Image in their Souls, he hath taken from them that noble distinction, and removed far away all difference between them and the World; we cannot with justice say to most Christians of our age, as was said to the Apostle *St. Peter*, *Thy speech bewrayeth thee.* Nor to appropriate to them, what *Isaac* said of one of his Sons, *Thy voice is the voice of Jacob, but thou hast the hands of Esau*; for they have both the Voice and Hands of prophane *Esau*, they speak and live as he did, they publish their crimes with a brazen

brazen face, and endeavour to glory in their shame; the Air is infected with their prophane and dirty Language, with their impudent Lying, with their fearful Oaths, and grievous Blasphemies, and the Earth is defiled with their horrid Sins and abominable Crimes, Coveteousness, Ambition, Lust, and all manner of Vices have mounted upon the Throne; they Act and Command in a furious manner in every place; They that have in their mouths the Holy Name of the Lord Jesus, and that make profession of following his Sacred Footsteps, give us good cause to take up again St. Paul's lamentation and complaint, *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things, Phil. 3.*

If we should seek in these days, for the Christian Vertues, where shall we find Faith, Hope, and Charity? where shall we meet with Righteousness, Fidelity, Holiness, Innocence, Goodness, Meekness, Humility and Patience, Piety and Devotion? You Daughters of Heaven, what is become of you? we cannot see any more your Angelical countenance, we are so far from beholding the delightful beams of your Divine Presence, that we cannot spy out any of your Footsteps upon Earth. You may therefore understand, Christians, thereby, that the Son of God is at hand, for iniquity abounds, Charity grows cold, and there is no more faith upon Earth.

In the midst of such a woful Corruption, who of us doth afflict his Soul, as Righteous Lot? who weeps day and night, as David, a Man after God's own Heart? where can we spy out the Fountains of Tears of the Prophet Jeremiah? Or the confusion of Face of Daniel? Or the Zeal of Moses, of Phineas, and of St. Paul? If the Angel of God that went through

through the midst of *Jerusalem*, did review in our days; the Inhabitants of this Land, I am afraid, that he would not find many marked with the Letter *Thau*; not any weeping and sighing for the abominations that are amongst us; for evil and wickedness are become familiar to us; by the means of our too usual inspection, our continual conversation, with the vicious, accustoms us to the grievousness of their crimes, and to the impiety of their discourses, as we are accustomed by degrees, to breathe in an unwholsom Air, without aversion, and to hear the fearful downfall of the Cataracts of the River *Nilus*, without repugnancy.

But we are so far from grieving at the universal inundation of Vice in the World, that we our selves are carried away with the impetuous torrent of corruption. Sin gets upon us insensibly, and overcomes us; so that the World is not unlike to the House mentioned by God himself in the 14 of *Leviticus*, for it is not only infected with an incommodious Leprosy, but it infects all such as dwell therein. The Men of the World have an easier task to teach us their Vices, than we have to teach and perswade them to Vertue. As a pestiferous Body may spread the infection, and give it to a thousand such as are whole; whereas, a thousand in perfect health cannot heal one infected with the Plague. So that what happened under the Ceremonial Law, happens now unto us; the clean Vessel did not sanctify the defiled, but the defiled did corrupt, by its approaches, such as were clean. Evil companies corrupt good manners, and the flames of the most burning Zeal, are extinguish'd by the coldness of the Age. As Lambs cannot feed amongst Briars and Thorns, without leaving behind them some of their Wooll; Likewise the harmless and meek Souls, cannot live amongst so much couzenage and malice without losing

ing something of their Innocency and Christaian Simplicity.

Who is it amongst us, that can say with a safe Conscience, that the World is crucified to him, and that he is crucified to the World? *Gal. 6.* Or who is it that lives in the World without being guilty of its sins, as the Fish drinks of the Sea water and receives nothing of its bitterness? *Psal. 26.* Who can converse in the Courts of Prince, as *Joseph* in Egypt, as *Daniel* in Babylon, or as *Queen Esther* in the Court of *Ahasuerus*? Is there any that can justly say, that he hath washed his Hands in Innocency, and purified his Conscience from all dead Works, to serve the living God? *Heb. 9.* Who can speak in this manner, *I have purified my Heart, I am clean from my sin?* *Prov. 20.* In truth, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. *1 Joh. 1.* We have good reason to break out into the Prophet *Isaiab's* exclamation, when he saw God sitting upon his Throne, *Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the midst of a People of unclean Lips,* *Isai. 6.* or we may say with the same Prophet, *From the sole of the foot, unto the crown of the head, there is no whole part.* Not only the Souls that are fixed to the Earth, but also such as mount up to Heaven by fervent Prayers, and devout Meditations, have good cause to acknowledge their imperfections, and to ask forgiveness. If any fancies himself to be perfectly whole and free from all infection, let him enter into his Soul, and seriously examine his own Conscience, and the same thing will happen to him as to *Moses*, when he put his hand into his bosom, he drew it out again as white as Snow, all covered with Leprosie, *Exod. 4.* where is there a Christian that feels no Law commanding in his Members, and struggling against the Law of his Understanding? Who is it that finds not
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by experience, the truth of St. Paul's saying? *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would*, Rom. 7. Gal. 5. Without doubt, such as know not, nor never have felt the bitter and vehement struglings of their carnal Lusts that War against the Soul, 2 Pet. 1. cannot conceive what it is to deny themselves, to put off the old man with his Deeds, to crucify the Flesh with its Affections and filthy Lusts, *Ephes. 4.* such know not what it is to mortify our Members, to cut off our right Feet and right Hands, and to pluck out our right Eyes, *Matth. 10.* that is to say, to destroy, and by an Holy violence, to give a deadly wound to all our brutish Passions and vicious Affections, when they should seem to us as dear and useful as our Hands, Feet, and as tender as our right Eyes, *Coloss. 3. Matth. 5.*

If these cursed affections could but declare their names, they would say as the evil Spirits of the Gospel, *Our name is Legion, for we are many.* As that Devil that possessed the Lunatick, mentioned by St. *Matthew*, he cast him sometimes into the Fire, at other times into the Water. Likewise these carnal Lusts labour to cast us sometimes into the Flames of Ambition, or into the burning heat of Covetousness, or to hurry us headlong into the gulf of unlawful Delights, or into the mud of filthy and carnal Pleasures. Furthermore, they break the Chains and Ties with which we imagine to stop their fury; they war and fight against us by day and by night; and at every moment they return to charge us home, and renew the combate. Every where they assault us, and have no more regard for Temples and Houses of Prayer, than for common and publick places. As Satan had once the boldness to encounter with *Jehosua* the High-Priest, before the Angel of God; Like-

Likewise these cursed Lusts are so impudent to tempt us in the most Religious Assemblies, and the devoutest Congregations, as well as where we are engaged in the most hellish and debauched companies of the World.

But these Lusts that War against the Soul, are as subtil and malicious, as they are cruel and obstinate; When they perceive us upon our guards, and see that there is nothing to be got, they conceal their weapons, and their fire, but it is with a design to surprize and burn us when we are least aware. As there are certain Creatures that counterfeit the Dead, that Men might not spend their labour to kill them; Likewise, this treacherous Flesh appears of its own accord, as dead, that we might spare it, and not totally deprive it of Life. If then we leave it in peace and quiet, it recovers its strength and vigor, and assaults us afresh with its poisonous Darts. When we imagine that we have cut up this wretched Plant by the root, it grows and breaks forth into bitterness. When we think that we have put out this Fire, with the Tears of our Repentance, it kindles again, and bursts forth into fiercer Flames. As soon as we have cut this cunning Serpent to pieces, with the sharp knife of true Repentance, it gets together; and when it seems to have lost all strength and heat, it recovers again in our Breasts, and wounds us to the very Heart. In short, as that evil Spirit, mentioned by our Saviour, in the Gospel, when he was driven out of one House, waited for a good opportunity to return; which as soon as he perceived, he took unto himself seven other Spirits, worse than himself, so that the last condition of that Man was worse than the first, *Mark 12*. Likewise, after an afflicting Fast, and fervent Prayers; after a torrent of contrite Tears; when we imagine that we have cast out of our Hearts, the most dangerous Lusts; if we begin to relent and open to
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them the door, they burst in again upon us with more fury, and render the sequel of our Life, far more bitter and unpleasant.

But if you had not so many sins, and that your Lusts were not so violent, when the old Man should not have so much strength in our Members, and that the temptations should not overcome us so often; tell me, I pray, Christian Souls, in what Vertues do you excel? Have they all the Beauty, the Glory, and Perfection that God requires? Is your Holiness without the least spot or blemish? Is your Innocency as white as Snow, and as bright as the Light? Is your Zeal as hot and burning as that of the *Seraphims*? Is your Charity sincere, without Paint or Disguise, as that of Christ, who gave his Life for you? Do you love God for his Name sake, or because of his Excellent Perfection? Do you love him with all your Heart, with all your Strength, and with all your Thoughts? Do you love him more than you love your selves, or any thing in the World? Do you hate all things that he hates? and do you carefully abstain from every thing that displeaseth him? Do you love your neighbor in God, and for the sake of that good God, whose Image he bears? Do you love him as you love your selves, without Hypocrisy or Disguise? Do you never deal otherwise with others, than you would have them deal with you? and do you perform to them the same good Offices, that you would have them perform to you, if they were in the same Estate as you be at present? Do you shine in the midst of the dark night of this Age, as so many Tapers lighted with the beams of the Sun of Righteousness? *Phil. 2.* Do you live as Citizens of Heaven, and as fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and as the Children of God? *Phil. 5.* Or as such as expect the Blessed Hope, and appearing of the Glory of the Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ? Is your
Heart

Heart in Heaven, where your Treasure should be, and your Glory and Happiness. And do you walk as Persons that ascend up by the steps and degrees of Piety to the Heavenly *Jerusalem*? *Tit.* 2. Do you go from Faith to Faith, from Hope to Hope? and do you make every day some new progress in Holiness? Do you never grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom you have been sealed for the day of Redemption? Are you immutable, abounding always in the Work of the Lord? *Ephes.* 4. And do you endeavour to be found in him, without spot or blame, in Peace? *1 Cor.* 15. 2 *Pet.* 2.

Tell me devout Souls, whether you be not as the Fire and the light? For as there is no Flame so pure, but hath its Smoak, nor Star so bright, but becomes dark and invisible at the first approach of the Sun; Likewise, There is no life so Holy and Harmless, but hath its imperfections, and cannot abide the sight of an impartial God, and the exact inquisition of his Justice. When we have well Prayed and Wept, and begg'd Forgiveness; and when God hath bestowed upon us a new Heart and a new Spirit; After all, we have need that God should enlighten us afresh with the Gracious Beams of his Divine Countenance, that he should lead us by the Hand, direct us by his Wisdom, and accomplish his Vertue in our Infirmities.

Examine seriously, *My Dear Friends*, unto what exercises of Devotion you are most addicted, and what secret motions you feel in your Souls. Who is it that hath the greatest share in your Heart and Affections? What Thoughts do lull you asleep, and what are those that awake you? What do you think upon for the most part, upon God and his Glory, or upon the World and its Vanities? upon Heaven and its Exelencies, or upon the Earth and its Riches? upon Paradise and its

mortal Delights? or upon the Flesh and its base satisfactions? And when you meditate upon Divine things, are you certain that you do it with a Religious attention, with an inward delight that ravisheth and comforts your Souls. And when you offer any Prayers unto God, do you perform this Duty with Humility and an Holy Zeal? are your Hearts and Affections carried up to Heaven, before you lift up thitherward your Eyes and Hands? are your Orations like the perfume of the Saints, that came out of Golden Viols? Are they like the Incense of the antient Israelites that did smoak upon an Altar, burning with a Celestial Fire? Do they thus proceed from a Soul purified with Faith, which is more precious than fine Gold? Do they come from an Heart that is enflamed with a Zeal that never dies, and that ascends continually on high? Do you bestow your Alms with that earnest and fervent Charity that God requires from you? Do you open your Bowels to your Brethren, before you open to them your Purse? And do you bestow your Hearts upon the Poor, before you bestow your Money?

And for the publick Devotions that you owe to God; Pray tell me with what Humility and Respect they are performed; Do you call your *Delight* the Days dedicated to his Glory, and to the Celebration of his Holy Mysteries, *Isai. 58.* or do you look upon them as troublesome? Don't they cause you to complain in your selves, as those prophane Jews spoken of by *Malachi*, *Behold what a weariness is it, Mal. 1.* Do you go up to the House of God with the voice of Melody, and transports of Joy? *Psalms. 41.* or do you go thither out of custom, in a careless manner? When *Jacob* went up to *Bethel* to offer Sacrifices, he buried under ground, all the Gods of Gold and Silver, that were in his Family,

mtiy, *Gen.* 35. Likewise, you Religious Souls, when you intend to go up to Offer your Spiritual Sacrifices in the true *Bethel*, where God bestows in such plenty his Bread from Heaven, that gives life to the World; Do you not forget to bury all your Earthly Cares, your Carnal Lusts? Or else do you nourish in your Hearts, all these false Gods, of whom the World is so fond? Do you look upon the Holy Assemblies with an unconcerned Eye? Or do you behold them with Reverence and Respect, as the living Images of that Glorious Church, gathered together before Gods Maiestique Throne, which worships him day and night in his Holy Temple? Are those Divine *Psalms* that are there sung only upon your Tongues, or do you sing them with your Hearts to the Lord? Do you think upon the Angels Songs, and the Holy Spirits Hallelujahs, with Holy transports of Joy? Is the Word of God only an Airy Sound that strikes your Ears, or doth it reach your Consciences? *Coloss.* 3. Doth not your Heart burn within you, while God speaks by the Ministry of his Servants, and opens to you his Holy Scriptures? *Revel.* 19. Doth this Heart of yours burn with an Heavenly Fire, or with restless impatience, to see the end of your Devotions, that you might return to your Domestick affairs, to your worldly Delights, or to your carnal pastimes? *Luk.* 14. Doth your Soul thirst for God, for the strong and living God? *Psal.* 42. And is the performing of the Holy Will of your Heavenly Father, become your Meat, and your only Delight? *John* 4. *Psal.* 103. In short, Do you flye as swift as the blessed Angels, when your great God and Saviour offers to you an occasion of advancing his Kingdom, of Comforting his Chosen, and edifying the Souls for whom he is dead? When *Abraham* offered unto God many Beasts in Sacrifice, a flight of Birds came and

lighted upon his dead Offerings, *Gen. 15.* Likewise, when we present unto God the Sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving, and intend to multiply the acts of our Devotion, a great number of vain and idle thoughts come to interrupt us. *Abraham* frightened away those troublesome Birds, but it is not always in our Power to drive away from our minds these intruding thoughts that disturb us in our Devotions. When we will lift up our selves unto God, and draw near to his Sacred Throne, our Hearts are far more dull and heavy, than ever *Moses's* Hands were; so that they fall down again to the Earth, and to mind Earthly things; we need therefore that our Chief Priest should hold them up; and furthermore, It is necessary that they should be perfum'd with the sweet smells of his most Holy Sacrifice, *Exod. 17.*

If *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, intreats that God would be pleased to sanctify the Words of his Mouth, and the Meditations of his Heart, *Psal. 15.* If the Prophet *Daniel*, whom the Holy Spirit stiles, *A man greatly beloved, Dan. 9.* who spent the days and the nights in devotion, seeks how to make his Prayers acceptable to God; If the Prophet *Isaiah* hath need that his Lips should be purified with a burning Coal taken from the Altar, *Isa. 6.* who will wonder if the Meditations of the devoutest Souls be so often interrupted? If their Prayers be so cold and lukewarm, who can think it strange that we are not able to Pray as we ought? *Rom. 8.* And that we have need to desire God's Holy Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, who prays and intercedes for us, with Sighs and Groans which cannot be expressed? *Zach. 13. Rom. 8.*

That which afflicts most the true Believers, is, that when they imagine that they have attained to some kind of Perfection in the exercises of Piety, they find many times, to their unspeakable sorrow, that they

they are but beginners, and that they have made no progress at all. For as the stone cast up into the Air, falls down of its own accord by reason of its natural weight ; and as the Water often heated, becomes as often cold and frozen, because cold is a property belonging to it ; Likewise our Souls that mount up to God in Holy Meditations and Zealous Prayers, fall down again to these Earthly Vanities, they become cold and heavy, for these are their natural Properties. God refused the Sacrifices of such Beasts as were lame and sickly ; if therefore he shall treat us, according to our Deservings, how will he except of us or our Devotions ? we that are weak and infirm in his service, and that cannot walk in his ways without stumbling at every moment ? For these Considerations I may apply to the Spiritual Joy, what was said of the Earthly and worldly mirth, *Joy is cut off by Sadness*, Isai. 65. For when we have felt in our Breasts this unspeakable Joy of the Holy Ghost, and that it begins afterwards to abate, it seems to us, as as if it had taken its flight to Heaven, as the smoak of *Manoah's* Sacrifice ; then as great a sorrow seizeth upon our Souls, therefore we may complain and cry out as David, *Will the Lord cast me off for ever ? and will he be favourable no more ? is his Mercy clean gone for ever ? doth his promise fail for evermore ? hath God forgotten to be Gracious ? hath he in anger shut up his tender Mercies ?* Psal. 77. And pray in the Language of *Isaiab*, *Lord awaken thy jealousy, and the stirring of thy Bowels, that are shut up to me.* Finally, if after all the exercises of Devotion, if after a serious and settled Meditation upon God's Holy Word : if after Fasting and Mortification, Prayers and Tears, and a constant attendance in the Duties of Religion, we find any good Progress in Piety ; we may then also perceive Vice to proceed out of our most Glorious Vertues, and Per-

fectest Graces. For as the Moth enters soonest into the richest Stuffs and Cloth; thus Pride creeps into the noblest Souls, and breeds in the most enlightned understandings. As a Primitive Doctor of the Christian Church hath very well observed, all Vices are begot by corruption, and by other Vices; only Pride and Presumption proceed from Vertue. O how hard a task is it for a Man enabled with Gifts and Perfections, that raise him above the Vulgar, not to be puffed up with Pride, nor deceived with the love of himself! As the beautiful Bird looks and admires the dainty and various Colours of its Wings, we do thus behold and admire our selves, we are in love with our own Beauty, and idolize our Vertues. Therefore as the Nurse leaves sometime the Child to his Legs, and suffers it to fall, that it might know its own strength, and learn to hold faster by the Hand; Thus God withdraws from us the assistance of his Grace, to humble us, and to cause us to employ more earnestly the help and favourable succors of his Holy Spirit. When St. *Peter* felt the Sacred Flames of that Holy Zeal that was kindled in his Heart, and that sincere love that he had for Christ; he rejoiced, and imagined himself to be strong enough to resist all the powers of Hell, and to frustrate all the fiery Darts of the Devil. This good opinion that he had of himself, and of his own ability, transports him to that confidence, as to contradict our Saviour Christ, and to protest, *Although all should be offended in thee, yet will not I be offended; and when I should dye with thee, yet will not I deny thee.* This was he who trembled at the voice of a Damself, so that his Fall and Apostacy, was not as notable as his Confidence was great; therefore it warns such as stand, that they should take heed of falling into misfortune, *Rom. II.*

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There is no good-natured Child; but is vexed to live amongst such as Curse and Reproach its Parents; and if we should happen to be concerned unawares in the offence, or to occasion the death of him from whom it had its being, it will feel an Eternal displeasure. Now it is certain, that whilst we live in this world, we must spend our time amongst those that blaspheme the Holy Name of God, and abuse the Glory of his Eternal Godhead. Moreover, Vice and Corruption are so universal, that we our selves offend this Father of Mercies and Compassions, we add sin to sin, and heap up our iniquities together.

Let us therefore conclude from hence, Believing Souls, that Death is not to be feared as an Evil or a Misery but that it is rather to be desired, as an Advantage and a Blessing. For seeing that it is to be wished for, because it frees us from all the calamities and sufferings of the World; It is far more desirable, because it closeth our Eyes, and conveys out of our sight, all the sins and abominations that abound in the World; and because it stops our Ears, and hinders us from hearing the Impieties and the filthy Discourses that infect the Air. Seeing that Death is to be embraced with joy, because it delivers our Bodies from the diseases that torment them, and our minds from the cares and displeasures that vex and afflict them; It deserves to be welcomed with greater expressions of Gladness, because it delivers us from all remains of sin, and puts a period to our natural corruption; so that it is to be esteem'd, and look'd upon as the Death and Destruction of the Old Man, rather than the Death of a true Believer.

Sampson rejoiced in his Death, because he knew, that in dying, his mortal Enemies should dye also, and be destroyed with him; we have more cause to

rejoyce at our Death, and to give God thanks at that time; seeing that in dying, or rather in passing from Death to Life, we may see the Destruction of all the dangerous Enemies of our Salvation, who are more dreadful to us than the Philistins were to *Sampson*. All the most cruel and barbarous Men of the World are not so much to be feared, as the Lusts of our filthy Flesh, that put out the Eyes of our understanding, that cause us to be the Devil's sport, and to worship many false gods.

We commonly run out with hast from a place infected with the Plague, and should not we make as much speed by our Vows and Prayers to get out of the World, seeing that Vice is so Infectious and Universal all over it, that so many thousand Souls are therewith miserably spoiled? Seeing the World is as a *Babylon*, where all manner of Debauchery, Vice and Vertue are mixed together, where injustice and impiety Reigns; have we not greater cause to be transported with Joy, when God delivers us from our woful Captivity, than the Children of *Israel* had when it pleased him to call them out of *Babylon*? Should we not sing unto him when the Lord returned back, and restored them of *Sion*, that came back from their Captivity, we were as those that dream, though our Mouths were full of Laughter, and our Tongues with Songs of Triumph?

In short, as the Lord Jesus, when he had restored *Lazarus* to life, and taken him out of his Grave, he had compassion of him, and could not see him any longer wrapped up in his winding Sheet, and tied with a Napkin; therefore he commanded, *Loose him and let him go*. Likewise, this Merciful Lord, who hath made us to be partakers of the first Resurrection, and called our Souls out of the noisom Grave of our Lusts, is moved with compassion for us, when he

he sees these wretched Souls drag about them the reliques of Sin, and some Remains of that Corruption in which they were wrapped. Therefore he will cause them to hear this sweet and comfortable voice, *Loose them and let them go.* Let them go to the Eternal-Mansions, to the City of the living God, to the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, to the Glorious Companies of Angels, and to the Church and Congregation of the First-born, whose Names are Written in Heaven.

A Prayer and Meditation for a true Christian, who comforts himself with this Consideration, That Death shall deliver him from Sin that Reigns so much in the World, and from all Remains of his wretched Corruption.

O Most Gracious High Priest, Holy, Innocent, separated from sinners, exalted above all the Heavens, who art now shining in Light and Glory, look upon me from thy Sanctuary and Compassionate my wretched Estate. Thou understandest well the cause of my grief, O Lord, who searchest the Hearts, and readest my most Secret Thoughts. Thou knowest, O my God, that I grieve to see so much Injustice and Impiety reigning this day in the World; to see Vice, Prophaneß, Superstition and Schism committing so many disorders in thy Holy Church; But that which chiefly increaseth my pain, and aggravates my displeasure, is to see my self guilty and spotted with the general corruption, and to feel my Flesh warring and struggling against the Spirit. The Lusts of the Flesh do not only disturb me, but they get many times the victory, and insult upon my infirmities. Sin shews not only it self to me in all its Hellish deformity, so that I am thereby ashamed of my self; but I also acknowledge, to the praise of thy Grace, that all that is best in me, cannot endure and exact Inquisition of thy Justice. Alas my God! how imperfect is my Piety? How languishing is my Devotion? I worship thee too much for custom, and in a very slight manner. I often praise thee with my Tongue, and Honour thee with my Lips, whilst my Heart is far from thee. The Love that I bear to thee is not pure and
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enflamed; and my Charity, instead of being burning, quite cold, or lukewarm. I have not a sufficient trust upon thy promises; and upon thy fatherly care, my Hope is not settled; It doth not fill my Soul with Heavenly Joys and Comforts. Thine eyes, O Lord, that sees all the secret Closets of the Heart, and that pierce into the depths, are too Holy and Pure, to pass over the sight of evil, and to approve of the ill-favour'd Features of Satan yet imprinted in my Soul; they don't only discover my sins, and iniquities, and all my evil Deeds, but they also behold all the spots and imperfections of my best performances, and of my most Glorious Acts. My Lord, and my God, I am not only grieved to see so much sin in the World, in the Church, and in my Self, but I am also grieved and vexed that I have not grief enough; That my Soul is not sufficiently vexed, as that of Righteous Lot; That the Zeal of thine House doth not eat me up, as it did the Man after thine own Heart; That mine Eyes are not become a Well-Spring of Tears, as those of the Prophet; That the cares of the Churches do not besiege me, as they did thine Holy Apostle; And that I do not sigh and cry as the servants whom thou didst mark with the Letter Thou. O wonderful Lord! Seeing that thou dost give me leave, wherefore is it that I do not embrace thee with a lively Faith and a serious Repentance? Wherefore do not I wrestle with thee by Prayers, and Supplications, and Tears? and that I continue not in these Devotions, until I have obtained thy most precious Blessings; until thou hast changed my Being, and my Life; until thou hast renewed my Spirit, and my Heart, to love thee, fear thee, and worship thee, answerable to thine infinite Merits and Glory? O Lord, I perceive thou hast not altogether forsaken me; I perceive the day of my deliverance breaking in upon me; I see Death coming to carry me out of this painful Dwelling, out of this life of bitterness and sorrow: I have this comfort, that I shall put to Death my
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most cruel and unreconcilable Enemies, and introduce me into the freedom of thy Children; It will cut off all the remains of that corruption in which I was first conceived, and usher me into that Eternal Light that shines for ever in Heaven; Therefore, instead of frightening me, the sight of Death-rejoiceth and comforts my Heart; for this cause I shall not fly from it, and turn my back, but I shall go and meet it; I will endeavour to hasten its coming by my Prayers and continual Wishes; I will embrace it when thou shalt be pleased to send it. O Almighty God of an infinite Goodness, when wilt thou reach unto me thy Hand from Heaven, to draw me out of this Egypt, that I may no longer see the cruelties and abominations committed in it? When wilt thou deliver me out of this Babylon, where Vice and Vertue are intermixed, and where the Creature receives the Honour, only due to the Creator? When wilt thou have the Compassion of my poor Soul that drags yet some of its Chains? And when shall I hear that sweet and comforting voice, Loose him and let him go to his God who calls him, and to his Saviour who holds out unto him his Arms wide open? When wilt thou send unto me thy good Angels to lead me up to thine Holy Mountain, to thine Heavenly Jerusalem, where no impure thing shall ever enter; or that committeth Abomination, or a Lye? When shall I see my self in that blessed Paradise, where there shall be no Serpent to seduce us, nor Lusts to war against us, nor evil company to corrupt and spoil us? When shall I behold the new Heavens and the new Earth, where Justice, Righteousness, and true Holiness are sitting upon the Throne? How long, Lord, shall I hear thine Holy Name blasphemed, and the Blood of thy Covenant trampled under foot? How long yet shall I listen to the impieties and abuses of the Children of this age? When wilt thou lift me up to the Dwelling of thy Glory, where I shall be no longer assaulted with the temptations from the World, with enticements from the Flesh, and with the fiery Darts of the Devil? where I shall be no more vexed

vexed with evil desires, false fears, and vain hopes? where I shall never offend my God, nor grieve his Holy Spirit, that hath sealed me to the day of my Redemption? O Holy of Holies! when shall thy Church be so sanctified and cleansed, that no spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing shall appear in it? When shall I see it decked with fine Linnen, cloathed with the Sun, and crowned with the Stars? When shall my Heart be as a golden Viol, from whence sweet Perfumes may ascend? When shall I behold thy Face continually? When shall I love thee without interruption, and serve thee without any Lett or Hinderance? When wilt thou put into my Hands a Celestial Harp, and into my Mouth the Songs of the Blessed? and when shall I worship thee in the company of all the Holy Spirits, without intermission, and for ever? When shall I sing forth thy Praises in Heaven? O Lord, when shall I appear with the Holiness of thy Saints, in the white Robes of thy Martyrs, and be as fiery as the Seraphims that fly about thy Glorious Throne? O my God! Let this Holy Zeal which thou hast kindled in my Soul, be like a Fiery Chariot, and an Holy Flame, to carry me up to the Heaven of thy Glory, where I am to shine in thy presence for ever, Amen.

CHAP. XXII.

The Tenth Consolation, is the Glory and Happiness of our Souls, at their Egress out of the Body.

IF there were neither Punishment nor Torment after this life to be feared; the Wicked and Unbelievers that prosper in the World, might justly esteem themselves the happiest of all men. And if there were neither Glory nor Rewards to be expected after Death, the Righteous and the Faithful, who drink, here below, Cups full of bitterness and sorrow, would be the most miserable of all Creatures. The condition of the Beasts would appear more happy than theirs, for they enjoy in quiet and peace, all the pleasures that the animal Nature is able to relish. They are not tormented by so many diseases that vex our Bodies; neither do they know the cares and displeasures that consume and fret our minds; They grieve not for the time past, nor trouble themselves with any apprehensions of the time to come; They never feel the grievous disputes of Lusts; They know not most of those Passions that torment and domineer over our Souls. All their pains and sufferings end with their breath; so that when they are dead, they endure nothing. If we make our Eyes the Judges of these things; we may say, *The accident that happens to Men and the Beasts is the same accident; as is the Death of the one so is the Death of the other.* But if we search and examine further, we shall find more difference than between Heaven and Earth, between Light and Darkness; for it
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is true, that the Death of Beasts delivers them from the sense of all evils, but it doth not introduce them into any real happiness; when it puts an end to their Misery, it puts a period to their Being, and to all that pleasure and content which they formerly enjoyed; for their Souls and Bodies die together without any hopes of living again.

If we look to the wicked and unbelievers, we shall find that Death deprives them, not only of their Honours, Riches, and of all their Pleasures and carnal Enjoyments; but it puts out their Taper in their blackest Darkness, and all their greatest Delights are lost in a vast Sea of bitterness. If Death looseth them from that Chain of Misery, from which all the Children of *Adam* are unseparable; if it frees their Bodies from the pain of any temporal evils, it casts their Souls into Eternal Torments; but for the vertuous and believing Christians, if Death is so great a friend to them, because it delivers them from many Evils and Miseries; it is a greater friend, because it opens to them the Gate that leads to an endless Glory and Happiness.

The Son of God had a desire to perswade us this Truth, in that remarkable Parable of the 16 of St. *Lukes* Gospel; for at one hand he shews a rich Miser, cloathed in Purple and fine Linnen, feeding upon Dainties, and living in much Splendor and Magnificence; and at the other hand he discovers to us a poor Wretch, named *Lazarus*, all covered with Sores, lying at this rich mans Gate, intreating that he might share with the Dogs in the Crumbs that fell from the rich Man's Table: the Dogs had compassion upon him, and lick'd his Sores; at last the poor Man dyed, and was carried by the Angels into *Abraham's* bosom. O wonderful change! He that was lately a companion, scarce good enough for Dogs, now solaces himself in the Angels Embraces: He that was lying at the Gate of a proud and unmerciful

ciful Wretch, is admitted into the Glorious Palace of Immortality, and reposes himself in the bosom of a charitable and rich *Abraham*, where he is sanctified with the Bread of the living God, and drinks of the Rivers of his Pleasures. The rich Man dyed also, but it happened, that while his Body was laid in the Earth with State and Honour, the Devils dragg'd his Soul into Hell, and cast it into a Fire that burns continually, and that nothing is able to extinguish: Therefore our Saviour represents this damned Soul, crying out of Hell fire, *Father Abraham, have pity upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in these Flames.* In the next Verses, our Saviour shews, how all the complaints of the damned are fruitless, and their tortures remediless; he makes *Abraham*, return an answer to this wretched Son, *My Son, remember, that thou in thy life time receivdest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

The Heathens have looked upon Death, as the end of all their Afflictions and Sufferings, but they have never tasted of the Powers of the life to come, they have never had any assurance of future Glory and Happiness. The Spiritual Joys, and Celestial Comforts, God keeps for them that fear him and worship him in Spirit and in Truth. These precious Riches and Divine Excellencies, are only discoverable to the faithful, especially, since the time, in which Christ our Saviour hath put Life and Immortality to light, through the Gospel. Hitherto I have given you a short survey of the calamities that attend upon us in this mortal life; I have essayed to present unto you all the Comforts that we may gather from thence, to strengthen a believing Soul, and enable it to withstand and endure all the encounters with which it is assaulted,

ed in this Valley of Tears. At present I intend to describe its future Happiness, when it is separated from the Body, and introduc'd into Heaven; I shall, as far as I am able, discover unto you that Glory and Bliss which our Souls enjoy, in expectation of the great Morn of the Resurrection. You must not think to see here any perfect Image of our Celestial Paradise, or any magnificent draught of the advantages reserved for us there; it would be as difficult a task as to paint the Sun in its splendor, or to measure the Waters of the Sea. I cannot find words to express my thoughts, all my conceptions are far below that perfect Happiness and highest Glory; I shall think that I have done enough, if I can but represent unto you some few beams of so great a Light; If I can but shew some drops of that Ocean of Heavenly pleasures, in which we shall swim for all Eternity.

I shall not deliver any thing from my own fancy, nor offer to speak of that which I have never learned from the great Doctor of our Souls; I shall not engage my self in vain speculations, more fit to please and puff up the curious Wits, than to comfort and rejoyce the devout Souls, and satisfy such as hunger and thirst after Righteousness: One word from the mouth of the Lord is better, and far more worth than all the reasonings of Humane Wisdom, than all the subtilties of Philosophy, than all the arguings and conclusions of the most refined and eloquent Ages. In this description, I shall not seek mine own Glory, nor the applauses of the World, but the Glory of my God, and the instruction of the Souls which he hath purchased with his Blood; I desire to be understood of the weakest capacities, as well as of the strongest; I hope that such as know the language of *Canaan*, such as have tasted of the good Word of God, and of the powers of the Life to come, will not mistake me; for such as have

not been accustomed in the discernment of spiritual things, unto whom the language of God's Holy Spirit is insipid and unsufferable, if they are not moved, nor benefited by this Treatise, I dare say, 'tis none of my fault, but theirs. Therefore as the wise Men when they travell'd to *Bethlehem*, where Jesus Christ was lying in a Manger, took the Star of the *East* for their Guide; Likewise, we that be marching to our true *Bethlehem*, where our great God and Saviour is sitting upon the Throne of his Glory; we will follow no other guidance, but that Divine Light which comes down from Heaven. And as it is impossible to number all the Stars that shine in the Heavens, therefore we are wont to reduce them to certain Figures and Constellations. Thus we will not undertake to shew you every particular of our private Meditations, upon this Rich and Divine Subject; but we will discourse unto you of the chief Heads, leaving the rest to your pious Thoughts, and the information of God's Holy Spirit.

Whosoever thou art that hast embraced Christ, dead and crucified, by Faith and Repentance, and knowest thy self united to him, and incorporated into his mystical Body; remember to praise this Merciful Lord, and rejoyce in his Salvation. Learn to admire the super-excellent Riches of the Treasuries of his Grace, and seriously consider how magnificent and liberal he is to thee; for he intends not only to deliver thee from all the sufferings and calamities that afflict thee, but he will also raise thee up to the highest and most transcendent Felicity: He will not only draw thee out of the deep Abyss of Death and eternal Damnation, but he will take thee up to the enjoyment of the most Blessed Life, and an immortal Glory. He will not only remove thee from this wretched Wilderness, where thou art tormented with Hunger and Thirst, and expos'd to the scorching heat of a burning Sun, to poison-
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ous bitings of the fiery Serpents, but he will introduce thee into his Celestial Canaan, where the Milk and Honey of the purest Joys, and most solid Comforts flow in abundance, and where thou shalt for ever repose thy self, under the refreshing Shadows of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. He will not only deliver thee from the captivity of this miserable World, which is a true *Babylon*, full of all manner of abominations, but he will lead thee in to this Holy *Jerusalem*, and carry thee thither upon his Arms; not with an intent that thou shouldst build and repair it with cost and labour, but that thou shouldest behold the Glorious and Magnificent Structures, reared up by himself alone from the creation of the World, and that thou mayest be Eternally satisfied with his overflowing Plenty. He will not only pluck off from thee the filthy rags of Sin and Corruption, but he will cloath thee with a Garment of Light, of perfect Righteousness and Holiness. He will not only wipe away all Tears from thine Eyes, but he will put into thy Mouth Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving. He will not only break the Fetters from thy Feet, but he will place upon thy Head a Crown of pure Gold. He will not only draw thee out of a black and noisom Dungeon, but he will place thee upon a Throne of Glory and Magnificence. He will not only extinguish all the carnal Lusts that War against thee, and put an end to all thy troublesome disputes; but he calls thee to the fruition of an Eternal Peace and Celestial Triumphs. In short, God will not only separate thee from the acquaintance of sinful and debauch'd Men, but he will cause thee to enter in amongst the thousands of Angels, and admit thee to the vision of his Glorious Face.

When a compounded thing comes to be dissolved, every part returns to its first Principle; Likewise,
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when Man dies, his Body returns to Dust, from whence it is taken, and the Soul returns to God that gave it: As the Bird, when its Cage is broken, flies away into the Air to seek its Liberty and Pleasure. Thus when this Body is broken to pieces by Death, the Soul flies above the Heavens, where it meets with Rest and Happiness; or as it is when the Net is torn, the Fish falls into the Water, where it lives and enjoys all its Delights; Thus when Death comes to break the strings of this wretched Body, the Soul enters into the River of Living Water, and into an Ocean of Heavenly Delights. Finally, as the Death of our Saviour Christ rent in pieces the Vail of the Earthly Sanctuary, and discover'd all its wonderful Mysteries: Thus the Death of a Believer rents the Vail of this crazy and sinful Flesh, and gives us a sight of the rich Treasures, and magnificent Excellencies of the Heavenly Sanctuary. You *Christians*, whom God calls to his Glorious Rest, who may express the greatness of your future happiness? It is not possible to imagine it as it is. When your whole Lives should have been nothing else but a continuation of Misery, and a Chain of Calamities, you have now just cause to comfort yourselves, and rejoyce in God with an unspeakable joy; for when all things are reckon'd up, the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us. You can lose nothing in this life, but God will restore to you an hundred times more in his Kingdom; besides, there is no comparison between the advantages of the life to come, and of this mortal Estate and Being. Grieve not, *Believing Souls*, to forsake an Earth overspread with darkness, full of Misery, and all infected with Sin; seeing that thy God purposes to receive thee into new Heavens, all enlightned with a Divine Light, and enriched with endless Felicities, where

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Righteousness and Holiness sit upon the Throne. Grieve not for the loss of the most Pious and Regenerated Societies; Seeing that thou art to be admitted into the Companies of the Glorified Saints, and Blessed Martyrs, who have washed and whitened their Garments, in the Sacred Blood of the Lamb; Seeing that thou art from henceforth to be reckoned in the number, and of the society of the Angels of Light, and of the glorious Cherubims. Fret not to leave behind thee the Holy Congregations of the Militant Church, for thou art going apace to the Glorious Congregation of the Church Triumphant; and in a few moments thou shalt find thy self amongst the thousands of Angels and Saints, that worship God day and night, and adore him who lives for ever and ever. If God hath bestowed upon thee worldly Riches, leave them without Regret or displeasure, for thou art going to possess inestimable Treasures, which shall never be taken from thee. If thou art advanced to great Employments and Honours, cast off thy Purple and Scarlet willingly, and of thine own accord, for God will shortly cloath thee with an infinite Glory that shall never change. When thou shouldest be raised up to the highest and most splendid Dignities, when thou shouldest enjoy a great and flourishing Kingdom, come down from thy Throne with joy, and let fall thy Scepter and thy Crown; for God calls thee to sit upon a Throne that can never be shaken, to an incorruptible Crown, and to endless Joys.

Can there be any Town so Rich, so Great and Noble a Seat, that thou mayest justly grieve to forsake it, at that time when God intends to make thee a Citizen with the Glorified Saints of the *Jerusalem* from above; where neither Crying nor Labor, neither Fear nor Grief, neither Poverty nor Want shall ever come near thee? where all the Inhabitants are Kings, and

possess Riches without value? Is there any Dwelling so Beautiful and Magnificent, that should cause thee to depart out of it with sorrow? for God will lead thee into his own Palace, all built with fine Gold and precious Stones, where God himself is the Light, and the Lamb is the Sun. Art thou delighted in the enjoyment of some pleasant Inheritance here on Earth? Then consider, that all the Inheritances of the Earth, are nothing in comparison of that uncorruptible Inheritance which God keeps for thee in Heaven, and hath prepared since the Creation of the World. Hast thou a pleasant Garden, or a rich Field? But what are all the Gardens of the World, in respect of the Heavenly Paradise, where the Tree of Life grows, that brings forth its Fruits every month of the year, and where the River of living Water, as transparent as Chrystal, runs continually?

What reason hast thou, *Christian Soul*, to grieve, when thou forsakest the pleasures of the World, that thou enjoyest with the Children of the Earth, or the Delights of the Body, which are common to thee with the bruit Beasts: Seeing that God will satisfy thee with his most precious Delights; for in the blessed Vision of his Face, thou shalt meet with fullness of joy? Hast thou any friends on Earth? Let it not trouble thee to leave them; for instead of one friend here below, whom thou fanciest to be real and sincere, thou hast thousands in Heaven, who will receive thee into the Eternal Mansions, and embrace thee as their companion, and the partaker of the same Glory and Happiness. Hast thou any Parents or Relations? I suppose that they are not burdensome to thee, and that thou receivest much more Pleasure and Assistance from them, than Grief and Ingratitude; yet thou hast a spiritual Parentage in Heaven, and Eternal Relations. Thou hast in the Mansian-House of
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thy Heavenly Father, a great number of Brothers and Sisters, with whom thou shalt live in a blessed Unity, as Members of one Body, governed by the same Spirit, and enflamed with the same Zeal.

Thou *Husband*, whom Death snatcheth away from thy beloved Wife, seriously consider, that God will unite thee to himself, by an unseparable Union, and that he purposeth to take up to him, some part of thy self, that thy expectations, thy hopes and affections might be now in Heaven. And thou also, O Woman! whom Death plucks out of the embraces of thy dear and loving Husband, remember that thou hast a Husband also in Heaven, who hath espoused thee to himself for ever in Righteousness, in Mercy, and Compassion; a Husband always Living and Glorious; a Husband, who loves thee with an Eternal Love, that is stronger than Death; whose affections are enflamed for thee in such a manner, that the water of all the Seas and Rivers are not able to extinguish; a Husband, who bears with all thine infirmities, and hath redeemed thee from all thy sins; a Husband who hath not spared for thee his precious Blood, that he might procure for thee the Glory and Happiness of his Kingdom; who invites thee to his Heavenly Nuptials, having prepared and appointed for thee a Room in the Banqueting-Chamber, where thousands of glorified Saints shall sit, and where the melodious Tunes of Angels shall be heard; a Husband who calls to thee, reacheth out unto thee his Hand, and opens his Bosom to receive thee. If thou hast found any satisfaction and pleasure in the company of that Person whom God had given thee for an assistant, and Mate; judge from thence, what Angelical Delights thou shalt meet with, in the ravishing embraces of thy Heavenly Spouse. The most pleasant Marriage days are gone as a shadow, but the day

which shall bring thee to thy Celestial Bridegroom, shall never depart nor darken ; so the Heavenly Contentments shall abide and continue with thee for ever, without the least distaste.

You beloved, and loving Children, who are yet in the bosom of a good Father, or of a tender-hearted Mother, suffer Death patiently to remove you far from them, and depart with joy to that good God that will receive you as his Children, satisfy your Souls with the Milk of his most Blessed Consolations, and will make you his Heirs, and Co-heirs with his Son Jesus Christ ; Say to him as the Holy Prophet, *When my Father and my Mother should forsake me, yet the Lord will receive me*, Isai. 66. Rom. 8. Psal. 27. And you Fathers and Mothers, that have a tender affection for your Children, if Death takes them out of your sight, and deprives you of the comfort of their company, grieve not as those who have no hope ; for when they should be never so accomplish'd, when they should have never given you but pleasure and divertisement, What are all these pitiful Delights that pass away in a moment, and that change oft-times into bitterness and sorrow, if compar'd with the Eternal Pleasures which we shall enjoy, in the contemplation of Cod's Glorious Face, and in a familiar acquaintance with his Divine Wisdom ? You shall not return to them, but they shall in their time go to you ; so that you shall shortly see one another, in the Dwelling of the Father of Spirits, *Matth. 27*. Death separates you for a while, but the Author of your Life will bring you together for ever.

Finally, of what age and condition soever you be, if you perceive the breath of your Life to stop, never grieve nor murmur at it ; for if Death separates you from your Selves, it brings you nearer to God, your chief Good ; and instead of a wretched and perishing life,

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life, it will promote you to the fruition of an Eternal and ever happy one.

If we had lived in the days when our Saviour was on Earth, there is none of us but would have looked upon it as a singular Happiness and Honour, to have been admitted with *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, when they went up to Mount *Tabor*, to be Eye-witnesses of our Saviour's transfiguration; A far greater Honour and Happiness, Death is endeavouring to procure you; it will usher you up to Mount *Sion*, it will transport you above all the Heavens, where you shall behold more excellent wonders than ever the Apostles beheld upon Mount *Tabor*; for you shall not only see this Glorious Saviour whiter than the Snow, and brighter than the Sun, but you your selves shall be transfigured with him, and cloathed with an exceeding great Glory. The Holy Apostles saw but two Prophets, but you shall see all the Prophets, all the Patriarchs, Apostles, Confessors, Martyrs, the Holy and Blessed Virgin, and generally all the Saints that Reign and Triumph in Heaven. The Apostles had a sight of this Glory of our Saviour, as of a flash of Lightning, it continued with them but a moment, for soon after thy came down from the Holy Mountain, and were again in danger of the same temptations as before, and besieged by the same Calamities. It will be otherwise with thee, O Christian Soul, thou art flying up to Heaven, from whence thou shalt never descend, till the great day of the Glorious Resurrection of our Bodies; Thou shalt not be assulted any more by any temptation; thou shalt have no more Enemies to overcome, nor Bitterness to digest. Thou are going to reap and enjoy the Blessed Fruits of thy Saviours Victories, and to be Eternally satisfied with the Celestial Pleasures that are at the right hand of the God of Mercies.

We

We esteem St. *John* highly priviledged, because the Lord gave him a sight of his Glory, of the Riches and Divine Excellencies of the *New Jerusalem*; but how much greater is thy priviledge? for that which this Holy Apostle beheld in a Vision and a Dream, God will discover to thee in Truth and Reality. Let thine Heart listen, and thou shalt hear the voice of thy Saviour, calling already to thee from Heaven, as unto his Beloved Disciple, *Come and see*, Come my good and faithful Servant, come my Son, or my Daughter, and I will shew thee my Glorious and Magnificent City, I will shew thee the Palace of my Glory, and all the Splendor and State of my Kingdom; Come, and I will expose before thine eyes, all my Riches, Treasuries, and my most precious Crowns; Come, and I will cause the River of Living Water, which proceeds from my Throne, to run before thee, and the Eternal Delights that proceed from my Face; I shall shew thee all these Heavenly Treasures and Glory, all the Angelical satisfactions, not in the visions of the night, in an extasy, in an Holy ravishment of the Mind, or in a Prophetical elevation of the Soul, but I will discover them to thee in Reality and Truth, by the assistance of a purer and more Glorious Light than that of the Sun. I shall not only cause thee to behold this Glory, these Treasures and Delight, but I will cause thee to be partaker of them for ever; for as thou hast pledged me in the Cup of my bitterness and sorrows, as thou hast continued with me in my afflictions, and hast been faithful unto Death; I will give the Kingdom to thee, as the Father hath given it to me, I will give thee the Crown of Life, and will cause thee to swim in the vast Ocean of the Eternal Pleasures; Thou shalt not only see all my Treasures, all my Pomp and Glory; thou shalt not only behold the Rivers and the Seas of my most wonderful Delights, and shalt be

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a partaker of them, but thou shalt see me as I am in my Kingdom; I will pull off the Vail that covers me, and scatter the Clouds and Mists that hide me, so that thou shalt look upon me without hindrance, and behold me face to face; thou shalt be transformed into my Likeness, and be satisfied with my Resemblance. You see therefore *Christians*, that although Death appears to us grievous and ill-favoured, we may apply to it what *David* said of *Abimaz*, that it is the Messenger of good news; Notwithstanding its hideous Vail and Cloak of Darkness, we have just cause to liken it to the Chariot of Fire, that carried up the Prophet *Elijah* into Heaven.

From what we have said, you may easily conclude with the wisest of Kings, *That the day of our Death is better than the day of our birth*; for our Birth brings us upon a wretched Earth, but Death carries us into a Paradise of Heavenly Delights. Our Birth exposeth us to several Encounters, but Death lifts us up upon a Chariot of Triumph. Our Birth expresseth from us Crying and Tears, but Death makes us sing for joy; our Birth brings us into the Light, but Death causeth us to shine as the Sun. Our Birth makes us to live a sensual and animal Life, of a short continuance, but Death introduceth us into a Spiritual and Angelical Life, that shall continue for ever. In short, our Birth casts us into the Arms of Death, but Death leads to the Well-spring of Life.

Therefore the Apostle *St. Paul* confesseth, that *Christ is gain to him both in Life and Death*, Phil. 1. And for the same reason, the Primitive Christians could not endure to see any person afflicting him self for the decease of Believers, because that it was the day of their Deliverance, Rest, Glory and Happiness; they did commonly forbid all manner of Mourning, for they judged that it is not proper that we should cloath our selves with black, and sadness, for their sakes who are clothed in white and shining Garments of Light and Immortality.

They

They look'd upon this Life as upon a continual Death, and upon Death, as upon the beginning of a real Life. Therefore they stiled the aniversary day of the Martyrs death, *The day of their Nativity*. From hence proceed the usual Songs of Praise, which they did commonly sing to perpetuate their Blessed Memories.

I need not cause yon to take notice, *devout Souls!* of the notable difference between the Death of God's Children, and the Death of the wicked, It is as great as between Heaven and Earth, between Paradise and Hell. *Balaam* had good cause to desire the one, and fear the consequence of the other; we have as much reason to cry out as he did, *Let me dye the Death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his*, Numb. 23.

You have heard how an Heathen Prince made this address to his Soul, *My little Soul, my little Darling, Hostess and Companion of my Body; thou art going to wander up and down in cold, obscure and fearful places; thou shalt never delight thy self in jesting, as thou hast been wont; thou shalt never give me any more pastime.* But when a Christian Soul goeth out of this mortal Tabernacle, he may talk to it in another manner, O my Soul! pleasant Hostess, and Heavenly Companion of this crazy Body, thou canst not wander out of thy way, for thou hast a faithful and a knowing Guide; Thou art already in the blessed company of Angels that shall bear thee upon their wings; thou art going to a Noble place, enriched with Light and Glory, and blessed with the sincerest and most Heavenly Delights: Thou shalt meet with no more Sorrows, Grief, nor Displeasure, which so often disturb thy quiet here upon Earth; Thou shalt rejoyce for ever with all the Glorified Saints, and sing Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving for ever, with all the Celestial Spirits. O my Soul! how great is that Glory and Happiness which thou mayest justly expect from thy God, who hath both an infinite Power, and an infinite Mercy and Goodness, seeing that he
hath

hath endeared thee unto himself, by giving his own Life to free thee from Death and Eternal Damnation? If your friends, or rather your enemies in this occasion, weep and are grieved at your departure; if they labour by their Tears and Sighs, to move your Heart, and to perswade you to remain yet here below, speak to them, as St. Paul did to those that wept about his neck, *What mean you to weep and to break my heart?* Acts 21. St. Paul. was then in his journey to *Jerusalem*, where he was to be bound and imprisoned, and to be carried to the City of *Rome*, where he was to dye upon a Scaffold by the separation of his Head from his Body; notwithstanding, St. Paul's friends comforted themselves with this expression, *The will of the Lord be done.* And what mean ye my friends? will ye hinder me from going up to an *Heavenly Jerusalem*, at the Gates whereof I must cast off all these Chains and Fetters of Mortality? I must leave my Sins and all my Sufferings and Grief? I shall enter into a new Glory, into the ever blessed company of Saints and Angels. If your love be sincere and real, prefer my Felicity and Rest, to the small satisfaction that you find in my company here below; Consider, that in the House of my God and in the vision of his Glorious Face, I shall find every moment more Joy and Pleasure, than I should have met with upon Earth in thousands of Ages. All the Pomp and Splendor of the World, all the Glory and State, its Riches and Treasuries, its Pleasures and Delights, are as unconsiderate to those that I am going to enjoy in Heaven, as a few drops of Water to a boundless Sea, or as a flash of Lightning to the Noon-Sun. Must the blind passion which you have for to see me continue with you, hinder me from seeing the face of my God and Heavenly Father? Suppose I were now shut up with you in some dark Dungeon, and bound with the same Chain; would you

you rather see me your companion, to continue in your misery and sufferings, than to behold me at a distance at liberty, in the fruition of a perfect satisfaction. Tell me not, that we shall never see one another any more; for can you be so great an unbeliever to doubt of God's Mercy, that intends to bring us together again in Heaven? Death separates us for a moment, but the Prince of Life will unite us together for ever in his Fathers House, whether he is gone to prepare a place for us. O Devout and Religious Soul! by such Language as this thou shalt be able to mollify the Hardest Hearts, and prepare them to behold thy Translation into Heaven, as *Elisha* was, when he saw his Masters Rapture. If they feel any displeasure and grief for thy separation from them; they will have more joy and comfort to consider with the Eyes of Faith, that extraordinary Glory and Happiness into which God intends to receive thee, of his infinite Goodness and Mercy.

If it happens otherwise, and that thou art to deal with weak minds, whose Love is blind, and whose Passions are so unreasonable, as to resist God's appointment, and to hinder thy promotion to Happiness; thou must overcome, by the strength of God's Grace, and the assistance of his Holy Spirit, all the furious reluctances of Nature. Thou must imitate *St. Peter*, when he saw our Saviour Christ in his transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*; he forgot his Family, and all his dearest Enjoyments in the World, therefore in that excess of joy, he cried out, *Lord it is good for us to be here.* In the same Language must you speak, *Christian Souls.* I dare be bold to affirm, if your mind is raised up by Faith into Heaven, to behold Jesus Christ shining in Light and Glory, and surrounded by all the Holy Angels and Immortal Spirits; As soon as you shall have but the least relish of Paradise, you will be so ravish'd with that extraordinary Happiness, that
you

you will easily forget the most lovely Enjoyments of the Earth, unto which you had devoted your affections; so that in that transport of Joy, you will be ready to burst out in this Language, My Lord, and my God, I am sick with Love for thee, I wish for nothing but for thy Glorious Presence; My chief Happiness is to be with thee, and to behold thy face, where I see already so much Light and Love. I confess, we shall not say as St. Peter, *let us build Tabernacles*; for we shall never be concerned as Soldiers, and Travellers, in Fights and Journeys; We shall not say, let us build an House, that we may dwell with thee and thy blessed company; for I see, O God, with the eye of Faith, the Palace which thou hast built from the foundation of the World, where thou hast prepared a place for me. Lord open to me the Gates of this Glorious Palace, that I may enter in, and sing forth thy Divine Praises.

My dear Friend, shall the miserable Pagans, who never tasted of the Heavenly Gift, who were never made partakers of the Spirit of Grace, nor of the powers of the Life to come; the Heathens who were without Hope, and without God in the World; shall they march courageously to meet Death, and wilt thou that hast had some foretastes of the happiness of Heaven, that hast seen some beams of its Glory, canst not thou resolve to depart out of the World? Shall a *Seneca*, who had no other means to strengthen himself, but the perswasion of his vain Philosophy, who had no expectation of advantages of the life to come; shall such an one look with a steadfast countenance upon his Blood and Life, gushing apace out of his veins, and thou my Brother, hast thou been brought up under the tuition of an Eternal Wisdom? Dost thou embrace, by Faith, the Glory and Felicities prepared for thee by God, and art not able to look
upon

upon Death, with resolution and courage? and canst not leave the World with expressions of Joy? Shall *Socrates*, whose crazy Body was animated by a sinful Soul, and who had no manner of Antidotes against Death, drink up that poison that was mixed for him as a pleasant cup of Drink? And thou Christian, that art animated by the Spirit of the living God, that seals to thee his great and most precious promises; Thou Christian, that enjoyest the earnest of that Inheritance prepared for thee in Heaven; shalt not thou be able to swallow down, with content, the cup that death holds out to thee? Thou hast a powerful and an infallible Antidote against this poison; for after this bitter cup, thou art going where thou shalt drink at leisure, out of the Rivers of Eternal Pleasures. Shall it be said, that in the Jews Houses, at the time of death, the sound of Instruments of Musick was heard, together with Crying and Lamentations; and at thy Dwelling, who hast an interest in Christ crucified, and seest him Reigning and Triumphant in Heaven; there shall be nothing heard but weeping and sighing, that praising God, and giving of Thanks, shall not be seen at such a time?

Finally, seeing so many persons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, have desired Death, to be free from all Earthly Evils and Calamities; hast not thou good cause to wish for it heartily, when it shall please God that thou mayest enter in the fruition of the advantages and happiness of the Heavenly Life? How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! Therefore, the Children of Men, or rather thy Children, the Brothers and Sisters of Jesus Christ, thy Well-beloved Son, put their trust under the shadow of thy wings; They shall be fully satisfied with the fatness of thy House, and thou shalt cause them to drink out of the Rivers of thy Pleasures.

If you be passionately desirous to taste of the Angelical delights, and relish the Divine pleasures that flow from the Throne of God and of the Lamb ; if you be really athirst for God, will not you speak in *David's* Language?

Psal. 42. As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God, my Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?

Psal. 63. And elsewhere, O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee, my Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty Land, where no water is, to see thy Power and Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.

It is not possible to taste of the Heavenly Joys, but we are constrained to cry out as the man after Gods own heart. *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts?*

My Soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, my Heart and my Flesh crieth out for the living God, Psal 84.

Consider well, believing Soul, what vast difference there was between the earthly *Jerusalem*, for which *David* was so passionate, and the heavenly *Jerusalem* where God intends to receive thee. What great disproportion was there between the little stream of *Shilo*, and the large River of *Paradise* ; between the materiel Tabernacle, the Mercy-Seat covered over with fine Gold, upon which the *Cherubims* did stretch out their Wings, and the immaterial Sanctuary of Heaven of *Jesus Christ* the true Ark of the Covenant, in whom are hid the richest Treasure of Wisdom and Knowledg, in whom the fulness of the God-head dwells bodily, and in whose glorious presence the *Seraphims* cover their Faces with their Wings, *Colloss 2.* How contemptible were the Sacrifices, Oblations and Burnt-offerings of the Children of *Israel*, in comparison of the Spiritual Sacrifices that are presented unto God in Heaven, in comparison of the Offerings burning there entire in the Flames of an Holy Zeal, and of a perfect Charity? And what was all the Frankinesce of *Arabia*, and the sweet smells of the *Holy-Land* which were burnt in God's presence, if compared with the Sacred perfumes that mount up out of the Golden Vials that are in the hands of all

the members of the Glorified Church. Seeing *David* esteems a Door-keeper of the House of the Lord, an happy man on Earth, How great shall thy Glory be, and extraordinary thy happiness, O believing Christian, for thou art going to be advanced to the most Honourable Room of that Celestial Dwelling, which God hath built with his own Hands? To this purpose, our Lord *Jesus* hath made to thee this gracious promise; *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the City of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name, Revel. 3.* If this great King was so desirous to hear the *Levites* singing the Praises of God, with their Tongues, and Instruments of Musick, How much more passionate should we be to hear the Harmonies of Heaven, and the Celestial Hymns of the Holy Angels, Archangels, Cherubims, Seraphims, and of all the Glorified Saints, who have in their mouths every one a new Song, the Song of *Moses* and of the Lamb?

When the Shepherds heard some few expressions of the Angels Songs, who praised God at the Nativity of the Son of God, they began to rejoyce with an exceeding great joy, they left their Flocks, and ran in hast to look upon the Child of *Jesus* in the Manger of *Bethlehem*; and, thou devout Soul, thou hearest already the sweet Anthems of Paradise, and the ravishing consorts of thousands of Angels; Thou knowest that thy Saviour sits there upon a Throne cloathed with Glory and Divine Majesty, and wilt thou not forsake all the base Employments of this sensual and animal life, to go and see this wonderful Saviour, who expects thee, and intends that thou shalt sit also with him upon his Throne?

Zachary climed upon a Sicamore-tree with an unspeakable swiftness, and an earnest desire to behold the Lord *Jesus* as he passed by, when he was in the estate of his humiliation and abasement. Shouldest not thou be as earnest

nest, O Christian Soul, to fly up above the Heavens, to see this merciful Saviour in the estate of his Glory and elevation, and to have him always in thine eye for ever and ever? When our Lord was come into the house of this poor Publican, he told him, That Salvation was that day come to his house; and shalt not thou, O blessed Soul, have more reason to say when thou shalt enter into the Palace of this glorified Redeemer, I am this day going into my Salvation and my Glory?

We highly esteem *Jacobs* happiness, when he was in *Bethel*, because God appeared unto him in that surprising Vision, mentioned in the 28. of *Genesis*; But if thou art an Israelite without fraud, I esteem thee to be in a more happy and a more blessed estate; thou hast a greater cause to break out into *Jacobs* Language, *This is Gods house, and the Gate of Heaven.* *Jacob* it is true saw the Heavens open, but he was not admitted into them at that time; but now God opens these Heavens to receive and lodge thee for ever. The Holy Angels of God went up and down the Ladder that reached up from the Earth to Heaven, but they left *Jacob* at the bottom of this Ladder; whereas the Angels that are about thee are come down to cause thee to ascend up with them, or rather to carry thee up in their hands, and bring thee to Christ typified by this mysterious Ladder. *Jacob* saw God at the top of this Ladder, but he was to go afterwards to *Padan Aram*, he was to travel up and down, to suffer many inconveniences, the heat of the day, the frost of the night, the dispelasure of his Father-in-Law, and his Treachery, he was forced to fly from the cruelty of his Brother *Esau*, nay more than that, he was forced to struggle and wrestle with God himself. Whereas here is now the end of thy Pilgrimage, of all thy troubles, and encounters: Thou shalt never feel the burning and scorching heat of thy afflictions. Thou shalt be no more tortured with the fears and Apprehensions that now congele thy Blood; Thou shalt no more stand upon thy guard for fear of deceits, and violent dealings of Men: Thou shalt wrestle no more with God

by Prayers and Supplications, and tears, for they shall be no more in use. God shall load thee with his most extraordinary blessings, and bestow himself upon thee.

The Prophet *Moses* wished very passionately to see, but for a moment, God's Face, whereof he had beheld so many glorious expressions, and shouldest not thou desire as passionately to see that beautiful and ever shining countenance in its Glory and Splendor? (O Religious Soul) thou art enflamed with this Divine affection, God will shortly fulfil all thy mind; so that thou mayest say to him as one of the Prophets, *thou shalt cause me to know the way of Life: Thy face is the fulness of Joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

Christian, if thou hadst but as much Faith and assurance, as there is Glory and Happiness in Heaven, with what excess of Joy shalt thou leave the World and all its vanities, to ascend up to that magnificent Palace, purchased for thee with the precious Blood of thy Redeemer?

Jonathans eyes were once enlightened, when he tasted some Honey with the end of his Rod, which he had found in a Rock; And (thou believer) if thou hast by Faith tasted the Divine sweetness that proceeds from Christ the Rock of Eternity, thine understanding will be all enlightened: Thou shalt need no other Consolation against Death, for Death it self shall fill thee full of Consolation and real joy; so that thou shalt have cause to speak, not only as *Jacob*, O God I expect thy Salvation, Gen. 49. but as *King David*, *I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord, our feet shall stand within thy Gates, O Jerusalem, Psal. 122.* By this means thou shalt not only expect with patience, and embrace with Joy, the blessed news of this Glorious Salvation, but thou shalt endeavour to hasten its coming by thy continual and repeated Sighs: O my God, when wilt thou stretch out unto me, from above, thy Gracious Arms? When shall I go into thy Celestial Sanctuary? when shall I see plainly thy Divine and Glorious Face? When wilt thou cause me

to drink out of the Rivers of thy pleasures? How blessed is the man whom thou hast chosen and taken to thy self, to dwell for ever in thy Holy Courts? such shall be satisfied with the good things of thy House and of thy Glorious Palace.

Joseph marched out of his Prison in haste, to go to the Palace of the Kings of *Egypt*; and hast not thou as much reason to make as much haste out of the Prison of this wretched Body, O believing Soul, that thou mayest go up to the Palace of the King of Kings, who intends to install thee into such a Glorious estate, in comparison of which, all the pomp of *Pharaoh* and of all the Kings and Princes of the Earth, is nothing but as the hore-frost of the night?

Bartimeus forfakes willingly his Mantle to creep to the Lord *Jesus*, when he called him; and thou Christian Soul, wilt not thou leave this body which is as a troublesome garment to thee, to ascend up to this Divine Saviour, who intends to cure thee of all thy distempers and Diseases, and who purposes to load thee with his blessings and unspeakable favours? He will not only bring thee to behold the refreshing light of Heaven, but he will also cause thee to shine as the Sun, for ever and ever.

Religious Soul, cast off this spotted garment of the flesh, and so much the more chearfully, because God holds out in his Hand a Garment of Light and glory, which he will bestow upon thee; for it shall happen to thee as to the Prophet *Elias*, who having let fall his Mantle, he found himself all encompassed about with Flames of fire, and an extraordinary light; for as soon as thou shalt put off this miserable body, thou shalt be surrounded with Celestial flames, in which thou shalt mount up to Heaven into the dwelling of Immortality, where thou shalt be like God, who cloaths himself with light as with a Garment. To this purpose the words of the Prophet *Zachariah* concerning the High-Priest *Joshua* are very proper; he was arrayed with filthy Garments, but an Angel from Heaven

calls to them that waited before him ; *Take away the filthy Garments from him, and cloath him with change of raiment, let them set a fair Miter upon his head* : This , O Christian Soul, is the true Image of thy condition, at thy departure, and the lively portraiture of thy future happiness. At present thou art cloathed with a Body undermined by sickness and labour, thou bearest about thee the relicks of the old man; but behold, God calls to thee from his Holy Sanctuary, Take away from him this old garment, pluck of all remains of this old cloathing bespotted with sin, where the Devils Image is yet to be seen, and give him the Sacred ornaments of a Royal priesthood; cloath this Soul with a long garment whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, gird it about with the Ephod of righteousness, put upon its head an uncorruptible Crown, and in its hand a golden Viol, that it may for ever offer up the Heavenly perfumes in the company of all the glorified Saints.

If, after all this, O Christian ! thou doubtest of the felicity and glory of such as die in the Lord *Jesus*, hear what an Apostle saith, who was himself ravished up into the third Heaven, where he beheld in this Glorious Palace unspeakable things; *We know, that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens ; for in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our house which is from Heaven: If so be that being cloathed we shall not be found naked ; for we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed but cloathed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of Life.* And listen to what the Holy Ghost saith, *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, for so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours and their works do follow them.*

Would to God that we had some other Word besides that of *Death*, to express the wonderful and happy change that we make when we go out of this miserable World ;
for,

for, to speak properly, we cannot be said *to die*, when we leave a place full of misery to enter into another blessed with an endless felicity ; when we exchange a laborious estate for a peaceable and an happy rest ; when we come off from a cruel War, to enjoy the pleasures of everlasting Joy ; when we pass through Death to an endless life ; and forsake a Tomb to mount up upon a Throne. Christian Soul, remember thy beginning and thine end, consider what thou art, from whence thou proceedest, and whither thou goest : Thou art a living Image of thy Creator, and a beam of glory ; thou art a celestial and immortal nature ; God hath washed and cleansed thee in the Blood of his Lamb, without spot and blemish, and sanctified thee by his holy Spirit ; he hath brought thee to an estate convenient to enter into his holy City, and he is ready to admit thee to take the fruition of his glory ; Thou hast *fought the good fight, finished thy course, and kept the faith*, it is therefore high time that thou shouldst receive the Crown of life ; Thou hast this precious Crown already in thine hands, Thou art at the Gates of Heaven and at the entrance of Paradise.

Go therefore, O believing Soul ! go with Joy and Gladness to this great God that calls thee, to this merciful Saviour that stretcheth forth his hands unto thee, and opens his bosom to receive thee : go into the Glorious company of Angels and blessed Spirits : take upon thee these beautiful Robes of light with which thine Heavenly Father will cloath thy nakedness, and accept this immortal Crown that he offers to thee ; go and satisfy thyself with the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, and remove thy thirst with the Christial Waters of that *River of pleasure, which proceeds from the Throne of God and of the Lamb* : Go and behold the face of the Father of lights ; go and be happy with his Divine resemblance ; and be transformed into his glorious Image.

O blessed Soul ! Seest thou not already the Heavens open, and *Jesus Christ* at the right-hand of God the Fa-

ther, holding out his hand unto thee, offering to receive thee into his glorious rest? Seest thou not the Angels of Heaven (cloathed in white raiment) coming to transport thee out of this miserable estate? Seest thou not how thou art already encompassed about with light and Celestial Flames? Dost thou not relish the sweetness of Paradise? Is not there a Heaven already in thine heart? Dost thou not hear the Hymns of the glorified Spirits? hath not the Lord caused thee to hear that sweet and comfortable voice sound in thine ear, *Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt be this day with me in Paradise; Come good and faithful Servant enter into the Joy of thy Lord?* Feelest thou not thy self lifted up above all earthly and perishing things? Dost thou not fly upon the wings of faith and repentance to the Throne of Gods Glory? Dost thou not cast thy self into Paradise, into the Arms of Almighty God, into the bosom of the Lord *Jesus*, to rest there for ever; and to be Satisfied with the good things which *eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard*, and which are not entered into the heart of *Man*, but which *God hath prepared for them that love him?*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation of a Christian Soul that prepares to go out of its Body, and comforts its self in the Contemplation of the glory and happiness of Paradise.

O God ! the Author of my being, and the Sovereign Lord of my life, thou seest all the motions and dispositions of my Soul, thou knowest that I have wholly resigned my self into thy hands, and desire nothing else but to depend upon thy good pleasure; speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth, here I am to do thy Will, O God. Thy People Israel removed their Camp at thy Command, in the same manner I am ready to remove out of this Earthly Tabernacle at the first motion of thy Will. The Golden Cheribims were always upon their feet, with their wings stretched out, and their faces towards the Mercy-seat; O that I likewise might look up to him who hath purchased for me the eternal Mercies of God; him, who is the Propitiation for my Sins; that I may be always ready to fly up to him: Lord Jesus! seeing thou callest me to thy self, stretch out thy hand unto me from above, and draw me out of this tempestuous Sea. When a poor blind man understood that thou calledst him to restore his sight, he left his Garment for haste, and ran to thee with joy, and shall not I quit this wretched body to go to thee my Lord and my God? seeing thou callest me out of the mid-night of this World to thy marvelous and glorious light? seeing that thou hast a design, not only to discover to me this surprising and refreshing light that shines in Heaven, but thou wilt cause me to shine in thy Kingdom as the Stars and as the Sun? When the Prophet Elias let fall his Mantle, he was immediately received into a Chariot of Fire, and carried up into Heaven; also, I hope in thy tender love and favour, that as soon as my Soul shall forsake this wretched Body, it shall be likewise received into a Celestial Chariot of Fire,

that

that will carry it up to Heaven, thou wilt deal as graciously with my Soul as with thine High-Priest Joshua; thou wilt take away its Garments shattered and broken by sickness and distempers, bespotted and bedaubed with sin, to adorn it with Robes of fine and bright linnen, and Crown it with glory: Therefore I am so far from being afflicted to see the earthly house of this Tabernacle demolished, that I rejoyce in a certain assurance that I shall be admitted to my eternal Tabernacle of Heaven. O good God! thou seest upon me a contemptible body of dust, that desires nothing more than to return to dust again; but this Heavenly and immortal Soul of mine, that is come from above, that is thy breath, and a beam of thy glory; this Soul, I say, will return up to its source and origin. It sighs for thee, O God! and desires nothing but eternal happiness. Is it possible that I can be happy too soon, and too speedily admitted to the Contemplation of thy glorious face? Lord, I should be worse than an Infidel if I did doubt of my Salvation; if I were not assured to partake of thy glory; for, thou hast promised to save all such as persevere to the end, and to give the Crown of life to all those that are faithful unto Death. Seeing therefore, that by the assistance of thine holy Spirit, thou hast enabled me to continue in thine holy and Divine Covenant, to fight the good fight, to finish my course, and to keep the faith; thou wilt not refuse me this great Salvation, this precious Crown: O merciful and bountiful Lord, thou hast promised all such as overcome, to cause them to sit upon thy Throne; now, by thy special grace and wonderful power that appears, and is fulfilled in mine infirmities, I have overcome the World, Sin, the Devil and Hell at present; I beseech thee give me a new supply of strength to overcome Death also, that I may have no more Enemies to encounter with, but that I may mount upon the magnificent Throne designed for me; let this Death be a passage that may bring me to life, immortality, eternal glory, and to the happiness of thy Kingdom. Thou art my God and Father, that lovest me with an unchangeable affection, reach thy hand to me thy child, for I long for thee, and open for me the bowels of thy

thy most wonderful mercies: O good Lord receive me into thy bosome, and satisfie me with the most effectual Consolations of thy goodness; thou art my Spiritual Bridegroom, draw me and I shall run, or rather I shall fly after thee, to magnify thy tender compassions, and to be filled with thine heavenly delights: Thou art the cheif Shepheard of my Soul, help me therefore in this vale of the shadow of Death, let thy Staff and thy Rod assist and comfort me, send me thy light and thy truth, that they may lead and conduct me up to thy holy Mountain, and to thine eternal dwelling; Send thy good Angels that they may carry me up upon their Wings; I expect, O Lord, thy Salvation, I do not only expect and hope for it, but I desire and wish for it with all mine heart; my Soul is athirst for God, my Flesh and mine heart leap for joy, for the strong and living God, O Lord, when shall I go up to the Heavenly Jerusalem? when shalt thou open for me the Gates of righteousness? When shall I go into the holy Sanctuary? When shall I be in the blessed company of the glorified Saints, who have Palmes in their hands, Crowns upon their heads, and Praises in their mouths? When shall I be with the thousands of Angels that are cloathed with light and glory? and with burning Seraphims that surround thy Heavenly Throne? O my God and Father, When wilt thou remove and take away this covering from mine eyes, that I may behold thy beautiful and glorious Face? When shall I see my self transformed into thy Divine Image, and sanctified with thy likeness? O Lord! thy grace hath brought me to a most happy estate. Who could expresse the joy and satisfaction of my heart? with the eyes of faith I see the Angels descending from Heaven to encompass me about, I see them ready to take me into their arms, and to transport me into thy glorious Rest. O my God! I have nothing to stop me in this World; I shut mine eyes to all things under the Sun; all my thoughts are employed about the glory of Heaven, and the pleasures of Paradise. Merciful Father, glorify thy Child, that thy Child may glorify thee; let me enter into the magnificent Palace of immortality, let me see my God face to face; let me embrace

brace my Saviour and only Redeemer; let me receive from his hand the incorruptible Crown, let me drink out of the Rivers of his pleasures, and let me swim in the Sea of his Heavenly delights. O God, whose goodness is unspeakable, speak to me in a Language suitable to those heavenly desires which thou hast kindled in my Soul. O that I may soon hear these sweet expressions; Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise, come believing Soul enter into the Joy of thy Lord: And before that I shall go into thy Heavenly joy, cause this joy to come into my Soul; before thou receivest me into Paradise, cause a Paradise to be in me; O my God, I feel an unspeakable and surprising gladness in me, I enjoy a peace which passeth all understanding; I see my self already surrounded with Light and Glory; If therefore my expectation be so happy and pleasant, what shall be the fruition? If the first-fruits are so ravishing, what shall we say of the harvest? I see the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ stretching out his armes unto me, and opening his bosom to receive me; my Lord and my God, my Saviour, and my All, I commend my Spirit into thy hands, for thou hast Redeemed it, thou who art the Almighty and true God, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit. Amen.

CHAP XXIII.

The eleventh Consolation. The glorious Resurrection of our bodies.

WHen God Created Angels, he gave them a Spiritual nature, that had little or no relation with the Elements; I confess that some of these Heavenly Spirits have often appeared in humane bodies to the ancient Patriarchs; but those bodies were extraordinary and subitaneous, formed by Almighty Gods Power, for such occasions; besides, those holy Spirits were not in those bodies as the Soul is in ours, quickning and animating them in the same manner, but only as the Pilot is in the Ship that he governs; therefore as soon as they had fulfilled the work about which they were employed by God, they left those bodies without prejudice to their beings, as the Pilot leaves and goes out of the Ship, when he hath brought it to the desired Haven. All the happiness of these glorified Spirits consists in this, that God hath confirmed them in his grace and love, and admitted them for ever to a continual contemplation of his glorious face. It is not so with our Souls, for although they be also spiritual and of an Heavenly substance, God hath not created them to be alone, and to subsist at a distance from all matter, but to live in the pleasant company of those Elemental bodies which he hath fashioned in a most Artificial manner. When he creates an humane Soul, and pours it into an organized body, it is not that it should be there as water in a Vessel, or as a King in his Palace; it lives not there as an assisting form, or as an outward cause of the Bodies operations, but it is united to it by a very strict union, and serves as an essential form; It is the Principle of our life, the internal cause of motion of Sense, and

of understanding: So that if we will speak properly, Man cannot be said to be altogether of a Spiritual nature, as the holy Angels, nor a single body, as the Sun and the Stars; but he is made up of both: Therefore if our Souls wish to depart out of this Earthly Tabernacle, it is not out of any displeasure against it, as it is in it self, for none did ever hate his own body, every one seeks to nourish and cherish it: But, by accident, because of the vanity and corruption unto which sin hath enthralled it, we desire earnestly to depart out of it, to a place where righteousness, and true holiness reign, that we might be with the Lord *Jesus*, to behold him nearer. It is therefore an undoubted truth, That unless the body partakes of the same happiness and glory of the Soul, Man cannot be said to be perfectly and entirely happy. I confess, it is no light occasion of joy to us, to know, that when our Soul casts off this earthly body, it enters into the eternal Dwellings of Heaven, whether it goes to behold the face of the Father of lights; But this holy Joy is disturbed with sad reflections, and this Heavenly sweetness is strangely altered with the bitter considerations of this poor body cast into the earth, and left to the mercy of the crawling Worms; for it is a most hateful thing to behold our body rotting and turning to ashes; that body that was our pavillion, our Palace; nay more then so, that was a half part of our selves: Therefore if we will render our Joy accomplished, and apply an effectual comfort to our Souls, we must nourish and entertain this pleasant assurance, That the ruine of our bodies, which causeth us to lament so much, shall not be eternal; but as our bodies fall down by death, they shall rise again one day at the general Resurrection. This is one of the noblest and most excellent Mysteries of our *Christian Religion*, and one of its most glorious advantages: The Wisdom of the World, with all its reasonings, and the heathenish Philosophy, with its rarest subtelties, could never attain to this wholesome and comfortable Doctrine: Therefore, when St. Paul

Preach

Preached to the Council of *Athens*, he was heard with admiration, until he had spoken to them of the Resurrection; as soon as he began to mention that, they laughed at him.

Therefore, while *Humane Reason* remains in its darkness and *Natural ignorance*, it cannot of it self find out the glorious Mystery; but as soon as it is enlightned with this light from above, it discovers its most remarkable circumstances, and acknowledgeth the *Justice* and *Necessity* of the future Resurrection of our Bodies.

First, Seeing that Rewards and Punishments ought to be proportionable and answerable to him who is to punish and reward, we must of necessity establish the Resurrection of our Bodies; otherwise the pains of the wicked cannot be most violent, nor the happiness of the Godly can never be absolute and perfect.

Secondly, As when a Traytor is executed, men are wont to fasten to the Scaffold, or to burn in the fire, the Instruments and Tools with which he had assaulted or offended his Prince; in the same manner, the bodies of the prophane and impious varlets, of the Traytors against God's Divine Majesty ought to be treated, they ought to be eternally punished with their Soul in Hell fire; because they have been the unhappy instruments employed in affronting our Creator.

Thirdly, The body is not only the instrument employed by the wicked against God, but encourageth them and hurries them on in sin; for its humors stir it up, inflame it, and carry it to evil Acts: For example, its sanguine constitution makes it luxurious, and inclinable to the filthy lusts of the flesh; its choler carries it to violent and furious actions; its mellancholy prompts it to the most horrid and hellish attempts: So that if such are to be punished that cause us to perform such grievous actions, it belongs to Gods justice to inflict upon the body, as well as upon the Soul, eternal punishments.

Fourthly, To every thing there is a season and a time, to every purpose under the Heavens, Eccles. 3. As the body of the wicked

wicked and of the reprobate hath had its good things, and its satisfactions during this life, it must needs have also in another life its punishments and its torments.

Fifthly, But, not to forget the reasons which have a relation to the faithful, and which are the Pillars and supporters of our faith and hope; we may say, That *Jesus Christ* is no less able to save us, than *Adam* was to damn us: Now *Adam* having lost both Soul and Body, we must conclude, that it belongs to *Christ* to save them also; Therefore the Body is to rise again, that it may partake of that Salvation or Redemption procured unto us by this great Saviour.

Sixthly, As we have born the Image of the first man, who was of the dust of the Earth, we must also bear the Image of the second man who came from Heaven, 1 Cor. 15. Now we bear not this Image at present, in this life, we must therefore bear it in another.

Seventhly, God hath not made a Covenant with part of man, but with all man, composed of Soul and Body: The body therefore must needs rise again, that it might gather the eternal fruits of glory and happiness, which are promised unto us by this Divine Covenant.

Eighthly, God is not only stiled, *The Father of Spirits*, and the God of the Spirits of all flesh; Heb. 12. But he declares himself to be the God of Abraham and of his Posterity, Numb. 16. 27. He is not only the God of the Soul, or the God of the body alone; but he is the God of believing persons, of both their Souls and Bodies: From hence it follows of necessity, That the bodies of such as are deceased, are not utterly destroyed, for God will raise them up again. With this argument *Christ* stopt the mouths of the *Saduces*, who denied the Resurrection; Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead (said he) Have you not read what God himself speaks to you? I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the Dead, but of the living.

Ninthly, God hath adopted us to himself by *Jesus Christ*,

Christ, according to the good pleasure of his Will, to make us the heirs of his Kingdom, and coheirs of his Son. From this passage we may gather a certain assurance of the Resurrection, for when this Father of Mercies shall see our bodies lying in the dust, out of his tenderness and compassion, he will say, there are the Bodies of my Children, the members of mine only Son; it is not convenient to leave them always in that shameful estate, in the bowels of the Earth; that love that I bear to them cannot suffer it; doubtless it was this consideration that caused the Apostle to call the redemption of our bodies *Adoption*, for by that he assures us, that he shall fetch out of their graves the bodies of all them whom he hath adopted; and that our future Resurrection is an effect, and a necessary consequence of our Adoption.

Tenthly, If we consider Death in it self, as it is in its own nature, we shall find it to be the wages of sin, and a punishment of our crimes: Now *Jesus Christ* hath paid for us these wages, and satisfied for all our sins, abolishing them in his Cross, we may therefore conclude, that Death is to be destroyed in respect of believers, and that their bodies must needs rise again.

Eleventhly, St. *Paul* assures us that *Jesus Christ* is the Saviour of his body: Now the body of this great God and Redeemer, consists not only in that infinite number of Souls purchased with his Blood, but also in the Union of all the bodies that have been the companions of these blessed Souls: Therefore as he hath saved our Souls from Spiritual Death and eternal damnation, he must also save our Bodies from corporal death, and redeem them from the power of the grave.

Twelfthly, If death did for ever detain our bodies in the grave, we could not say, to speak properly, that our Saviour hath swallowed up death into victory, and that he hath destroyed the Sepulcher, for in such a case, Death and the Grave would remain victorious, and triumph eternally over these miserable Bodies.

Thirteenthly, Our Saviour hath suffered in his Soul and

in his Body, and by that means he hath purchased to himself both our Souls and Bodies, according to St. Pauls excelent intimation; *You are bought with a price, glorify therefore God, in your Bodies, and in your Souls that belong unto God.* From hence we must conclude, that this glorious Saviour will be deprived of part of that which he hath purchased by his inestimable sufferings, if our Bodies did always continue in the power of Death.

Fourteenth, the holy Ghost hath Sanctified our Bodies and made them his Temples, as St. Paul teacheth us, *Know ye not that you are the Temple of God, and that the holy Ghost dwelleth in you?* From hence the Resurrection of our bodies must needs follow as a necessary consequence; for can we imagine that God will suffer the Temple of his Holiness to continue for ever in its ruins and Desolation; will he not rear up again the noble Pavillion of his glory cast down by Death?

Fifteenth, God hath predestinated us to make us conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born amongst many Brethren: Now the Soul and the Body of this only begotten of the Father that were separated by Death, have been joyned again in his glorious Resurrection, and received into Heaven; therefore our Souls that departs out of the World to enter into Paradise, must return again to its Body, that we may ascend up to Heaven both in Soul and Body. All the difference that appears between *Christ* and us is, that the precious Body of our noble Chieftain could not be subject to corruption, but was raised again as soon as it fell, because of that strict and personal Union between his Humanity and Divinity; whereas the most part of all other bodies are corrupt and reduced to Ashes.

Sixteenth, We have the same holy Spirit, and Divine vertue dwelling in us, which was in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the efficient cause of his Resurrection, although not in the same measure and degree; therefore it will produce in us the same effect, and raise our bodies also from the dust St. Paul makes use of this Reason in the 8 of the

Romans; if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Seventeenth, The dead body that touched the bones of the Prophet *Elisha* revived again on a sudden: We have more cause to expect the Resurrection of our bodies, because our bodies don't only touch *Jesus Christ* dead and risen again, but we are become one body with him, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone: I am (said he) *the Resurrection and the life*, he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die; and he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, Eph. 5. John 11.

Eighteenth, God hath imprinted upon our bodies his own Signet, and the marks of his love; he hath given to them visible and palpable assurances of their future blessedness. Under the *Old Testament*, believers carried the Seal of the Covenant of God in their flesh: for Circumcision was the Seal of the righteousness obtained by faith and hope of a blessed immortality; they did also eat the flesh of the Paschal Lamb, which was a type of *Jesus Christ* the true Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the World. Likewise, under the *New Covenant*, God consecrates to himself our Bodies by the *Waters of Baptisme*, and by the *Bread and Wine* of the *Lords Supper*: So by this means he assures them of a Joyful and glorious Resurrection. For if by eating of this Bread, and drinking of this Wine, we eat and drink spiritually the Flesh and the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, it is an infallible assurance that this Divine Saviour will raise us up again at the end of the World, as he himself promiseth, *Who so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day*, St. John 6. 54.

Nineteenth, The body of believers endures many assaults and evils for *Christ's* sake, and for his holy profession: it is often exposed to the most shameful and most cruel torments, and partakes on the same sufferings as he did on Earth; Therefore it is just that it should partake in his

triumphs, glory and eternal happiness; *It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him. We always bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh,* 2 Tim. 2. 2 Cor. 4.

Twenty, There is nothing that God doth in vain, he never bestows upon us useless desires; therefore to what purpose hath he kindled in us such an earnest desire to see this wretched Body out of the misery and corruption into which sin hath enthralled it, and the fruition of Glory and Immortality? As St. Paul tells us in these words, *The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature it self also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Children of God: He adds immediately after, For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they, but our selves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit; even we our selves groan within our selves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body,* Rom. 8.

Finally, Seeing that whatsoever God hath appointed in his eternal Council must be fulfilled in time, and that all things in the World attain to those ends for which he made them, and seeing that he created our Souls not to be alone, but to live in the company and fellowship with the Body, therefore this Body which falls down by Death, must needs rise again at the Resurrection, that the immortal Soul might return to, and dwell with it for ever.

To say that the Resurrection of our bodies is impossible, is he greatest and most abominable Atheism in the World: 'Tis to deny with impudency the infinite power of God, and the sacred History of the Worlds Creation: For if things are in their beings, as they are in workings, and if their operations are correspondent to their natures, we must of necessity conclude, That if
there

there be a God of an infinite being, he must needs have a power answerable to his being; And by consequence that this Almighty God, may, without difficulty, raise the dead. If thou believest that God calls the things that are not as if they were; Wherefore dost thou not also believe that this same God will also call the things that have been already, to restore them that being which they have formerly enjoyed from his Almighty Hand? If thou believest that God hath fashioned *Eve* out of one of her Husbands ribs, that he made Man of the dust, and created this dust out of nothing, canst thou not also believe that God is able at the day of the Resurrection to make again thy body of that dust into which it is reduced by Death? If thou believest that God hath breathed into *Adams* Nostrils the breath of Life, that he hath created thy Soul, and infused it into thy Body, where it was never before; How canst thou question his power, of returning one day the same Soul into the same Body, where it formerly made its abode? In short, if thou believest that the holy Ghost, by moving upon the Waters, hath caused so many beautiful and noble Creatures to appear, and that he hath made light to shine out of darkness, canst thou not be also perswaded, that this same holy Ghost can shew his Power amongst the Graves, and fetch thy Body out of the dark shadows of Death, to introduce it into the light of the living?

Thou seest by experience that every day a new House is built up of old materials, and dost thou wonder how the great Architect, who hath built the great World, by his Word alone, can gather up the old pieces and materials of this little World, to make up a new building, adorned with Divine Graces and Beauty? Shall the Statue-maker be able to restore again his bruised Image reduced to Ashes, and shall not God be able to restore man created after his own Image and likeness, to his primitive estate and being; In a word, let the difficulties seem never so great, remember (Christian Soul) what the Angel *Gabriel* told the blessed Virgin, *With God nothing shall be impossible*

I know very well that it is an old Axiome of Philosophy, *From privation to the habit there is no returning.* That is to say, when once we are deprived of, and have lost a natural faculty, it is never to be recovered again. But the Prophane Atheists, do wrongfully abuse this Maxime, against the Article of our Resurrection, for it is most true in respect of natural and secondary causes : It is not to be doubted that when the faculties of nature are once lost, they are not to be restored by Humane Art or Skill ; and when a man is dead, 'tis not possible for all the Creatures to bring him to life again : But nothing is able to limit the power of an infinite Agent. He that hath formed the wonderful eye in whom we live, move and have our being, can not he open the Eyes of a Man born Blind, and restore Life to a dead Corps ? This same Philosophy whereof the Maximes are brought against the Resurrection, declares openly, *That God can do all things, that imply not contradiction.* Now there is no contradiction in believing that God can render life to him that had lost it ; and that what is fallen down by Death, should rise again by the Resurrection. To the end that this Resurrection of our Bodies might seem less strange, God hath been pleased to give us in nature many Images and likenesses. I am perswaded (*Believing Souls*) that you will not be displeased if I mention here some of the chief.

As when the Sun goeth down, and the Earth is covered with the dark shadows of the night, Mans declining and the darkness of the Grave is represented. Likewise, when this King of the Stars rises, when he brings with him the day over our Heads ; there is a beautiful and perfect Image of the Resurrection.

Secondly, When the Moon parts with all its light and Splendor which it borrows from the Sun, when it covers its self with a Vail of darkness, 'tis the Image of Death, and a representation of that Vail which it draws over our eyes: but when the Sun begins to look upon it again, and by that means it recovers its former brightness and Glory, it discovers before our eyes, in a manner,

that

that which shall happen to our Bodies, when the Sun of righteousness shall rise and cast upon them his favourable aspect.

Thirdly, The Spring, Summer and Autumn, follow one after another, and the Winter shews us an Image of Death: but when the Sun begins to return again upon our heads, when it covers the Earth with a beautiful green, and revives the sleeping Vertues of Nature, he expresth to us the Resurrection in lively colours.

Fourthly, The Trees that are in Winter without Flowers, Fruits or Leaves, discover to us the hideous aspect of Death, that strips mans body, and deprives him of all that is beautiful and pleasant to the eye; but when these same Trees flourish again, and are loaden with fresh leaves and fruits, they put us in mind of the blessed Resurrection of our Bodies.

Fifthly, The seeds that corrupt and rot in the ground, represent our Bodies rotten in the Grave; but when these seeds appear above Ground, and flourish, they express excellently well the blessed estate of our Bodies, rising again to a new life, and recovering a perfect beauty, and a new glory. This similitude the Son of God himself recommends to us: *If the grain of Wheat which falls to the Earth, doth not dye it remains alone; but if it dies it brings forth much fruit*, John 22. And the Apostle St. Paul insists at large upon this comparison, thereupon he exclaims against the stupid Atheists who will not believe that a dead Body can revive again, *O fool that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die* 2 Cor. 15.

Sixthly, I find more wonderful what is said of certain herbs which rise again out of their Ashes; for example, if you burn Gall, Armois, and fling its Ashes upon the Earth, you shall see the same herb grow again: Many have tryed and found this experience, The same is reported of a kind of Palm-tree, and because in the Greek *Φοινίκη* a Palm, is called *Phœnix*, this ezperiment hath gi

ven occasion to the Fable of the *Phœnix*, a Bird that is said to revive again out of its own marrow and Ashes. Who is it but will say, that this is an excellent expression of the Resurrection of our Bodies?

Seventhly, There are also several sorts of Insects which shadow out unto us Death and the Resurrection: As the Silk-Worms; for when these small creatures have finished their work, and spun out that silk with which the Garments and stately attire of Kings and Princes are made, they bury themselves in a Tomb which they build: afterwards, they become like to a little Bean which hides under its thin Skin the formation of a white Butter-fly. The same is observed of the Chenilles, Catapillars, for when they seem stark dead, they creep out of their little Sepulchers in the forms of Butter-flies, of so many rare and various colours, that they ravish the eye into admiration; so that many curious persons keep them in their Closets amongst their rarities.

Eighthly, Amongst the Beasts also, some seem to be dead for several Months of the year, being without Sense or Motion, but afterwards they awake again, or rather they begin a new life to move about as they did before.

Ninthly, But we need go no further than our selves to find the Image of Death and of the Resurrection; for is there any that can express Death more perfectly than our dead sleep, that Stupifies our Sences, puts a stop to the Spirits of our Bodies, and binds up our most active faculties? So that we have then Eyes without seeing, ears without hearing, a nose and cannot smell, and a living Body but we have no feeling: But as soon as such a person comes to awake again, to open his eyes, to stir and to act, he represents a most perfect Image of the Resurrection.

I might also add amongst the Images of Death and the Resurrection, the several changes and alterations that happen to the *States* and *Empires* of the World; for oftentimes they appear as dead and buried, but afterwards they

they rise again from their falls, and march out of their obscurity as in a glorious Resurrection: But I shall wave these similitudes, and consider only such as the Church of God in several Ages have recommended to us as Types of the future Resurrection of our Bodies.

First, *Noah* and his Family, (in which, all the Church of God of that time was comprehended) remained in the Ark as in a floating Coffin, during the space of one hundred and fifty days ; But after the deluge, God caused them to march out of that Ark. In the same manner, after that our Bodies shall have been in the Graves so many years or ages (as God hath appointed in his wonderful Wisdom) he will draw them out again by his infinite power, and will say to us all, *Come out and appear to Judgment.*

Secondly, The People of *Israel* went down into *Egypt* and dwelt there 200 years, or thereabouts, as in a kind of Sepulcher, but God delivered them at last, caused them to go up to the Land of *Canaan*, as by a blessed Resurrection.

Thirdly, The *Red Sea*, into which this People went down, and in which *Pharoah* with all his host was drowned, is an Image of our Grave, and the great power which God discovered to make this people pass through that dreadful Sea, and to go up out of its depths, as by a miracle, shews to the blindest understandings, that Almighty Power which God will one day declare, in drawing his People out of the depths of Death, that we may be able to sing the Song of *Moses* and of the *Lamb*.

Fourthly, When the Ark of Gods Covenant was taken Captive of the *Philistins*, and shut up in the house of *Dagon*, it was a Type of those Bodies which God hath chosen for his Ark, and which are to remain for a time in Satans Prisons, under the Command of Death ; but when the *Philistins* sent back again this Ark, and that the Children of *Israel* received it with outward expressions of great Joy, it is a plain description of that which shall happen, when God shall oblige Death to open all its Prisons

Prisons, and release all its prisoners; a description, I say, of the wonderful Joy of the inhabitants of the *Celestial Canaan*.

Fifthly, *Babylon* also, where the *Church of Israel* remained Captive threescore and ten years, is a Symbolical representation of the Grave, where these miserable Bodies are to continue in Captivity: Therefore, by allusion, the Prophet stiles it a Lake without Water, but the deliverance of *Israel* from the *Babylonish* Captivity is a Type of our *glorious Resurrection*: For that reason the holy Men of God declare it in such terms as have respect to the Resurrection of our Bodies from the Grave.

Sixthly, *Solomons Temple*, that was demolished and pull'd down by *Nebuchadnezar*, and that lay many years in a desolate condition, is another Type of the Body of believers destroyed by the Devil, and remaining for a time in the dust: But when the *Jews* were returned from *Babylon*, they reared up the Walls of this Temple, and builded it again: This represents the Resurrection of our Bodies, the Temple of the living God. Our Saviour had an eye to this allusion, when he told the *Jews*, *Destroy this Temple, and I will build it up again in three days*; for his beloved Disciple adds immediately after, that he spoke of *the Temple of his Body*.

Seventhly, You may find the Types and Images of the same thing in many of the faithful, in *Joseph*, *Daniel* and *Jonas*; for as the Prisons of *Egypt*, the *Lyons-Den*, and the *Whales Belly*, represents the Grave; likewise, when *Pharoah* commanded *Joseph* out of Prison, when *Darius* causeth *Daniel* to be taken out of the Den, and when God orders the Whale to return *Jonas* upon the dry ground, the Resurrection is thereby described.

Eigh bly, But there is no passage, Type nor figure more expressible in the Old Testament, concerning the Resurrection, than that of the 27 of *Ezekiel*; for that the Children of *Israel* might understand the greatness of Gods power, able to free them from the *Babylonish* Captivity, he caused the Resurrection of the dead to appear before
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his Prophet; he carried him away into a large Field covered all over with dead and dry Bones; but at Gods command these Bones drew near one to another, and began to be joined; afterwards the Sinews appeared, the flesh covered them, and the skin was stretched over them; then a breath came from the four Winds upon these dead Bodies, entered into them, and they rose up alive upon their feet, so that they seemed as a great Army.

But God hath not only represented the Resurrection by many illustrious and excellent Types, but he hath also expressly foretold it by the holy Prophets: *Isaiab* speaks of his mystery in an excellent manner, *Thy dead Men shall live together, with my dead Body shall they rise; awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the dead*, Isa. 26. And there can be nothing plainer than the Prophecy of the Prophet *Daniel*, *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*, Dan. 2.

Therefore, in hopes of the Resurrection, the Patriarchs were very careful of their Tombs. *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, had no inheritance in the Land of *Canaan*, and yet he was very desirous to buy for himself and Family a burying place: When *Jacob* lay upon his Death Bed, he commanded his Son *Joseph* in this manner, *Deal kindly and truly with me, bury me not I pray thee in Egypt, but I will be with my Fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place*, Gen. 47. And when *Joseph* was ready to yield up his Soul unto God, he told his Brethren, *That God would surely visit them, and that they should carry his Bones from thence*, Gen. 50.

All the faithful of the *Old Testament* have publickly declared their expectation of this blessed Resurrection from the dead; As may appear by that noble passage of *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth; and though after my skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold and not another*,

Job 19. As may also appear by the magnificent words of David, *I will behold thy Face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I wake with thy likeness*, Psal. 17.

Martha, the Sister of *Lazarus* was well acquainted with this Mystery, as is to be proved by what she told our Saviour *Christ*; *I know that my Brother shall rise again at the Resurrection at the last day*: And the *Pharisees* maintained the belief of the Resurrection from the dead against the *Saducees*, who denied the Resurrection and immortality of the Soul: Therefore, when *St. Paul* was to answer for himself before the *Jews* Tribunal, where half were *Pharisees* and half were *Saducees*, he made this crafty Declaration; *I am a Pharisee, and the Son of a Pharisee*; for the hope of the Resurrection of the dead I am called in question: And when he made his Apology before *Felix* the Governor, he spake in this manner; *This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my Fathers; believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have hope towards God which they themselves also allow, that there shall be Resurrection of the dead, both of the Just and Unjust.*

As the *Jews* of our time have forsaken God, God hath also forsaken and given them over to a reprobate sense, for as they set aside the infinite merits of the *Death* and *Passion* of *Jesus Christ*, they vainly perswade themselves, that their sins are sufficiently expiated by their own Deaths: Notwithstanding the grievous corruptions that are to be found in their Doctrines, they depart out of this life in hopes of rising again one day; for that reason they are careful in washing their dead Bodies, in burying them with honour and decency; and when they have thus laid them in their Graves, they bow themselves three times towards the Earth, and cast behind them Grass newly pluckt up from the Ground; by which ceremony, they would have us understand, that the Corps which they lay in the Earth shall one day rise again and push forth, according to the Prophets expression, *Your Bones shall grow as the Grass.*

But this Article of the Resurrection of our Bodies ; which is found in some few passages of the *Old Testament*, is to be seen almost in every Page of the *New* ; And the passages concerning this truth are so plain and exprefs, that 'tis not possible to reject this wholesome Doctrine, but we must at the same time abjure Christian Religion, and give the lie to the holy Ghost.

That our faith might be settled the better, God hath been pleased, not only to publish this Resurrection from the dead by his Prophets and Apostles, he hath not only discovered to us many excellent and delightful Types and Figures of the Truth ; but to give to us a more experimental testimony of his power, he hath raised several from the dead. In the *Old Testament* God raised up two Children, one at the Prayers of the prophet *Elisha*, the other at the request of *Elisha's* Successor, *1 Kings* 17. And when a dead Body had been laid in *Elisha's* Grave, and touched his Bones, he returned to life again, *2 Kings* 6. And during our Saviour's abode on Earth, he raised to life the Daughter of *Jairus* that was dead, the Widows Son of *Nain*, who was carried out of the Gate to be buried ; and *Lazarus* who had been four days lying in his Grave, whose body began to stink, *Matth.* 9. *Luke* 7. When this merciful Saviour gave up the Ghost upon the Cross, *The Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which slept, arose and came out of the Graves after his Resurrection, and went into the holy City and appeared unto many, Matth.* 27. After his Ascension, he raised from the dead *Dorcas* a charitable Widow, at the Prayers of *St. Peter*, and to comfort the poor Widows that wept for her ; and a young man named *Eutyches*, was restored to life by the means of *St. Paul*, that the Congregation of believers, who were troubled at the unexpected fall, and sudden Death of that man, might have cause to rejoyce and comfort themselves in an assurance upon God.

But chiefly we have the example of our Lord, who hath raised himself up by Divine Power: This glorious instance, is able, not only to stir up our admiration ;

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but also to settle our Faith, and nourish our hopes: For the Resurrection of other persons shew what God can do, but the Resurrection of *Christ* declares unto us what God will do, and is in earnest to assure us of our future Resurrection. It is not possible to believe as we ought, that *Jesus Christ* is risen from the dead; but we must also, by a necessary consequence, believe that he will raise us likewise: This St. Paul endeavours to teach us, *If we believe that Jesus Christ is dead and risen, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*, 1 Thess. 4. As the head is, so shall the members be: As the first-fruits are, so shall the rest of the harvest be. The same Apostle labours to perswade this truth in these excellent words, *Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept; for since by man came Death, by man came also the Resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive: But every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christs at his coming.*

Some are ready to oppose against this holy and Divine Doctrine, this objection, That some Bodies are consumed by fire, and burn'd to ashes; it is true: But what follows from thence? For whether the Bodies be reduced to dust or ashes it matters not, God is able to restore them and render unto them their primitive forms: Seeing that certain herbs (consumed to ashes) rise again out of the ground, by a natural inclination, as we have already observed; and seeing that art is so industrious, as to make transparent Bodies (of an extraordinary beauty) of melted ashes; shall not God, who is so far transcendent above all abilities of nature created by him, and of all Arts and Sciences which proceed from his direction, be able of ashes, to compose a beautiful and a perfect body?

Others pretend next, That a great many bodies have been drowned in the Seas, and swallowed up in the Waters; I acknowledg that to be true: But I affirm, that God is altogether as able to draw a body out of the depths of the Sea, as out of the bowels of the Earth. He that

hath prescribed bounds to this great Sea, that dries up its vast concavities, and lays open its bottomless bottom; Hath not he a command over this Sea? Cannot he oblige it to a restitution of those bodies that have been committed to its keeping, as when he commanded the Whale to bring again to Land the Prophet *Jonas*, whom it had swallowed up alive?

Some object, That there are bodies devoured by the Beasts, which have been their Food, and have been turned into their substance, But this objection is not to be valued; for when a humane body shall have passed through the Bowels of the Beasts, and been changed a thousand and a thousand times into their substance, there is nothing that can hinder God from restoring them again at the day of the Resurrection; for those Animals shall never rise again: It is therefore nothing to the purpose to enquire after them, when the Body shall reassume that which they shall have devoured, and turned into their own substances. The strongest and most plausible objection concerns *the Anthropophages the eaters of Men*; for it is very well known, that in the *Indies* there are some Savages so barbarous as to feed upon humane flesh, and to esteem it as their greatest dainties: Some answer to this, That such kind of inhumanities are not ordinary, and that such wretched *Indians* never practice such heinous things but in urgent necessity, or when they purpose to revenge themselves upon their Enemies: But such as have given an account of the *New found America*, relate, That in some Provinces there have been such cruel and inhumane Savages, as not only to devour the flesh of their Enemies whom they sacrificed to their Idols, but also of their dearest Friends, whom they do cut in pieces in their Shambles: These same Historians tell us, That some of the barbarous people are so impiously mistaken, as to reckon it an act of piety and duty to their Parents and Friends, to give them a Sepulchre in their own stomachs. Moreover, they say, That there are some, who like so many mad Dogs feed upon Infants, and hunt after Men as we do af-

ter wild Beasts of the Field. In case all these relations should be true, I must desire my Reader to take notice there are to kinds of parts that compose the humane body, the one solid, as the Bones and Nerves, and so essential to it, that without them it would cease from being any longer an humane body; the other parts are adventitious, accidental and changeable, they serve to maintain it almost as the food and nourishment: Now, this I affirm, as an undoubted Truth, that when it happens that Men feed upon their own Kind, God takes care, by his wonderful Providence, that the essential and solid parts of the Man devoured never enter into the substance or composition, or the solid parts of the devourer. At the great day of the Resurrection, the bodies will reassume all their essential and solid parts, without which they cannot be true bodies; but they shall not need the accidental and fluid parts, as are the humors and the Blood, for then they shall have no more inward heat to consume them, no more hunger and thirst; Therefore they shall never have any need of meat or of drink, or of any other thing whatsoever, to serve them instead of Nourishment. Let the mettals be never so much mingled, the Goldsmith separates them with ease. Thus, let our humane Bodies be never so much altered and mingled, God will be able enough to separate and distinguish them from one another: When the Goldsmith will separate the mettals, he casts them into the melting-pot, and causeth them to pass through the Fire; but God who can do all things without means, hath no need of the Fire or of the melting-pot, for by his Word, at the twinkling of an eye, he can cause this separation to be made; and render unto every Body that which necessarily belongs to its composition. In a word, when the difficulty should be far greater than it is, and when the resolution of his objection were not so easie to be made as it is; it should not weaken our Faith, or cause us to doubt of the Resurrection of our Bodies.

When it concerns things that the holy Scripture doth not expressly declare and decide, or that cannot be drawn from it by a necessary consequence, it is lawful to dispute either for, or against such things; but if it concerns as this sacred Writ, inspired of God, plainly sets forth, our Faith must learn her Duty, to submit to Almighty God, and believe that there is nothing impossible with him, Now this Doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead is so expressly and plainly found in this Holy Scripture, that it seems as visible as the beams of the Noon-Sun. Many questions are made upon this subject, some are of that importance, that a reply will give most satisfaction upon this excellent subject; first, they enquire by whom and by whose Power shall the Resurrection be effected? The Scripture gives an occasion to make this inquiry, for it ascribes it sometimes to the Father, as in the 5 of St. John, *The Father raises the dead and quickens them*, sometimes to the Son, as in Phillipians 3. *Jesus Christ shall change our vile Bodies according to his mighty working; whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself*. And sometimes to the Holy Ghost, as in Rom 8. *If the Spirit of him who hath raised Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that hath raised up Jesus from the dead shall quicken your mortal Bodies by his Holy Spirit that dwelleth in you*. This difficulty may thus be resolved; All the outward works of God, that concern the Creatures, are common to the three Persons, of the most Holy, most Glorious, and most Wonderful Trinity.

So that we shall rise again by the infinite Power of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, the Resurrection is especially ascribed to the Son as he is Judge of the quick and the dead: In order to the discharge of that glorious employment, all Power hath been committed to him in Heaven, and in Earth, and in the Seas.

2. Some enquire further, When shall this Resurrection be? I answer, that it shall be in the day which God hath appointed, to Judge all the World, by the Man whom he

hath ordained, *Acts 17*. You are not to expect from me, *Christians*, that I should point out unto you precisely the day when this shall come to pass, for it belongs not to us to know the Times and the Seasons which God hath reserved to himself. It is true, we may see that most part of the Prophecies are already fulfilled, so that we may say in general terms, *The Lord is at hand, and our Salvation is nearer to us than when we began to believe*, *Phil. 4*. *Rom. 13*.

Nevertheless, I cannot undertake to make out unto you this Glorious Day, nor to tell you the year nor age when this shall be; There is no Man upon Earth, nor Angel in Heaven that is able to speak of it with certainty; therefore *Jesus Christ* himself informs us, *But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only*, *Matt. 24*. If our Saviour saith more, that *the Son himself knoweth not the Day*, *Mark 13*. We must understand this as he is a Man, and during his abode in the World, for as he is God he knoweth all things from all Eternity; and now that he is glorified as he is Man, he understands all things. But he hath hid from Men the time of his coming, that we might expect him at every moment: as he tells the Holy Apostles; *watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come but know this, that if the good man of the House had known in what Watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his House to be broken up*, *Matt. 24*. He writes in the same Language to the Angel of the Church of *Sardis*, *Remember how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast and repent; if therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as the thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee*. The first Christians were very well acquainted with this wholesome Doctrine, as we may judge by this passage of *St. Paul* to the *Thessalonians*, *But of the times, and of the Seasons, Brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for your selves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night: for when they shall say Peace and Safety, then sudden Destruction cometh upon them,*

them, as travail upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape, 1 Thess. 5. As the days of Noah were, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man; for as they were before the Deluge, Eating and Drinking, Marrying and giving in Marriage, and were not sensible of the danger, until it was come and carried them all away, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man, Matt. 25.

The Wiseman tells us, *that hope delayed causeth the heart to languish*, Prov. 3. But we must except the hope and expectation of the Resurrection, for when this blessed Resurrection should not come to pass, yet many thousand Ages, it should not cause such as dye in the Lord to languish; for whiles their Bodies are in their Graves, they suffer nothing, and as they are there without feeling, cannot be impatient, no more than a Man that is in a deep sleep; for the Soul it enjoys, in the contemplation of Gods Face, such unspeakable satisfactions, that it is not capable of grief, sorrow, displeasure, or the least disturbance. St. Peter tells us, *that a thousand years with God, are but as a day*, 2 Pet. 3. We may say the same of those who are admitted to Gods glorious presence, to behold his Face, for a thousand years, in such an happy Estate, appear less than one day in this miserable condition. The hundreds and thousands of years pass away far quicker to the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, than the moments do to such as live in troubles upon Earth.

3. Others desire to know where this Resurrection shall happen? The Jewish whimsys and extravagancies have given occasion to this question, for they think that the dead shall rise in no other place but in the Holy-Land; and therefore they have made another childish Fable, that the Bodies of all their Nation that dye in several parts of the World, shall go through earthly vaults, and roul through the secret conveyances of this Globe, until they come to the Land of Canaan, where they are to arise from the dead; and as one error occasions another, they say further, That they shall feel more or less pain in their

Passage, according to their goodness or sins of their lives. I need not spend any time in the refutation of this foolish and impertinent opinion; but it may justly cause us to acknowledge the just Judgement of God, upon this unhappy people, who have refused with a devilish obstinacy the great Saviour of the World; for because they have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved, God hath sent them strong delusions that they might believe a lye, and hath given them over to a reprobate sence, 2 *Thess.* 2. For us, Christians, we say that without so much ado, where the Body is, at the last day, there it shall rise from its Grave.

4. The next question is, What shall rise from the dead? I answer, that the same body which falls by Death shall rise again at the General Resurrection; if God did make a new Body to joyn it to our Souls, it would be no more a Resurrection, but rather a new Creation: neither shall we only take such a Body as our own, for things that are only like, are not the same, let them be never so much alike; but we shall take again the same Body, which our Soul doth animate during its abode here below; and if I may employ the expressions and terms of Divines, it shall not only be the same Body, but also the same Individual: as in the first Resurrection, God creates not a new Soul, but he regenerates and sanctifies that which was dead in its trespasses and sins; thus in the second Resurrection, God makes not another Body, but he only bestows another life upon that which was lying in corruption, and amongst the dead. As when our Saviour rose from the dead, he made not for himself a new Body, but he took again that same which had been formed in the Womb of the blessed Virgin. Likewise, in the General Resurrection, he will not create for us a new Body, but he will render unto us that same which we had from our Mothers Womb; this argument is not to be answered, for the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ* is not only the efficient or meritorious cause of ours, but also

so the patern and model, or as the Scool-men tell us, it is the exemplary cause of our future Resurrection; but there is no need of arguments, when the Word of God is so clear and expresse on this subject. St. Paul informs us, *That the Lord shall change our vile Body, that this corruptible must put an incorruption, this mortal must put on immortality, Phil. 3. And that the life of Jesus shall be made manifest in our mortal flesh, 2 Cor. 4.* And the holy Job saith, *Job 19. not only that he shall see God, but that he shall see God in his flesh, and that he shall see him with his Eyes:* For the same reason, in some ancient Copies of our Apostles Creed, as in the Creed of *Aquila*, I find not only, *I believe the Resurrection of the flesh, but I believe the Resurrection of this flesh.*

5. Some ask whether the Bodies of the wicked shall rise from the dead, as well as the Bodies of the righteous? the Jews that delight in whimsycal inventions, fancy a Resurrection only for the Just, in which unbelievers and reprobates have no share. To strengthen this dream they abuse the words of the first Psalm, *The wicked shall not stand in Judgment, nor sinners in the Congregation of the righteous.*

Finally, They are so much besotted with an high conceit of themselves, that none are righteous but of their own Nation; that none are pleasing to God, or that ought to rise again from the dead but the Israelites; but we Christians, are brought up and instructed in better Doctrine, we believe, without difficulty, that all Men that are dead since the beginning of the World, of every People and Nation under Heaven, shall rise again at the day of Judgment: for St. Paul assures us, *That there shall be a Resurrection of the Just and of the Unjust.* David in the first Psalm speaks nothing against this truth, which is as clear as the Sun, and as well grounded as the Heavens and the Earth, for he saith not that the wicked shall not rise again, but only that he shall not stand before God in judgment; that is to say, that he shall not

ubstist before the Tribunal of Gods Justice, nor be able to abide the fiery presence of God, angry and displeased for their impieties : But this we may observe, that although God will raise up all the Men of the World, without exception, from their Graves, there shall be a notable difference between them ; for he will raise the wicked up, and draw them out of their Graves, as a Judge drags an Offender out of his Dungeon to sentence him to Death ; but he will raise again believers as their Redeemer, that their Bodies as well as their Souls might enjoy the blessed fruits of their Redemption purchased for us : therefore this Divine Saviour stiles them *Children of the Resurrection* ; for none but they shall inherit his blessings, and partake of his Eternal Glory.

6. Some inquire further, in what manner shall this Resurrection be ? I answer, That our Lord and Saviour shall come down from Heaven cloathed with light and glory, and attended upon by the Angels of his Power, and millions of his Saints ; He shall be preceeded by the cry of an Arch-Angel and the Trumpet of God ; for the Trumpet shall sound : and as at the sounding of the Silver Trumpet, that did Proclaim the *Jews* Jubile, all the Prisons were opened and the Prisoners set at liberty ; in the same manner, at the sound of the last Trumpet, all the Prisons of Death shall be broke open, and the Bodies that were imprisoned shall go out ; to speak in the Language of the Holy Ghost, *The Sea shall give up the dead, and Death and Hell shall restore the dead that are in them.* And as *Lazarus* rose up as soon as *Jesus Christ* had called to him in his Tomb, *Lazarus come out* ; likewise, when the Voice of this great God and Saviour shall sound in our Tombs, at that moment we shall rise again and appear before him ; for the hour cometh that such as are in the Graves shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that shall hear shall live.

7. The next question is, in what stature of Body shall we rise ? some are perswaded that we shall rise in the same stature

stature that we dye; this they gather from St. *John's* description of the last Judgment, *I saw the living and the dead, the great and small standing before God.* Others think that all the elect shall rise again in perfect stature, and shall be all like to our Saviour *Christ*; which they endeavour to prove by St. *Paul's* words, *We shall meet in a perfect Man, to the measure of the perfect stature of Christ.*

When it concerns things that relate to our Salvation, it is respective ignorance to refuse to pry into those things which God hath concealed, or not thought fitting to reveal; therefore as the holy Writ is silent concerning this, we cannot speak of it with too much sobriety; I dare not affirm, that we shall all rise again in the same stature, I confess that this opinion, That all the Saints shall have a stature like to our Saviour *Christ*; and that they shall bear his Image and likeness, in that respect in their Bodies, contains nothing contrary to Piety; but I dare say, that this cannot be proved by the words of St. *Paul*, for the sequel of his discourse shews most evidently that he intends not the stature of the Body, but that of the Soul, which consists in knowledge and holiness.

That opinion which appears to be most likely, and most conformable to the Analogy of Faith, is, that the Elect shall all rise again in a perfect stature; for the beauty and perfection of the stature, contributes much to the Glory and Majesty of the Body, without which man cannot be said to be most perfectly happy: besides, this perfection is answerable to that Command and Dominion which God shall give to the Saints, over the Creatures, after the Resurrection: if those that dye in their childhood, did rise again in the same stature, if those that depart in their old and decrepid Age, did come out of their Graves with their feeble and crasie Bodies, How could either of them be fit for that Glory and Perfection, where nothing shall be amiss or wanting? As the promised Land was the Type of the Celestial Canaan, it is not without good

cause that the Scripture takes notice that there was no Body of those that went over *Jordain* into the Holy Land that was old and decrepid, unless it were *Joshua* and *Caleb*, none of the rest was threescore years old; I may also apply to the *Jerusalem* above, that which the Prophet saith of the *Jerusalem* here below, the Type and Figure of the Celestial: *From thenceforth there shall not be any Child of a few days old, nor no ancient person who fulfilleth not his days.*

Finally, As God created *Adam* and *Eve* in a perfect stature, to settle them in the Terrestrial Paradise; it is my opinion, that he will also raise up all the faithful in a perfect stature, to introduce them into the Celestial Paradise. In this life the Body of a Child is many years before it can attain to the stature of a perfect man; but at the great day of the Resurrection God will grant it to him in a moment.

That which is spoken of in *Revelations* 20. doth in no wise appose this Doctrine, for when the holy Ghost saith that *the dead small and great shall stand before God*, That relates not to the stature or bigness of Body, but to the state and condition of the Persons; that is to say, the Kings and Princes shall appear to Judgment as well as the vilest and most contemptible Subjects, and the most wretched slaves; therefore these former words are designed to express nothing more than what *St. Paul* saith, *That we must all appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ, that we might receive in our Bodies according as we have done, whether it be good or evil.*

8. Some are ready to ask what manner of Bodies shall the Reprobates have after the Resurrection? I have no mind to speak any thing of my self, otherwise I should answer, that in consideration of the fury of Hell Fire, the smoak of the bottomless pit, and the violence of the excessive Torments which they shall suffer, they shall appear most deformed, ugly, ill-favoured, and dreadful to look upon; I should say, that there shall appear in their guilty looks, and frighted countenances, the Devils Image, and that of the Hellish furies; but it will be sufficient to
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reply, That the Bodies of the wicked shall be Immortal, and that their Immortality shall be most miserable; that it had been far better for them to have never been, or to have been as the Beasts that Dye without any hopes of living again; for they shall Live to Dye eternally, and they shall Dye but never consume away. It shall not be possible to add any thing to their most violent Tortures, for they shall be infinite; nor to the continuance of their sufferings, for they shall be eternal; Therefore, as we have already taken notice, they shall seek Death, that is, they shall desire to be reduced to nothing, but Death shall flie away from them, and give them over to a Worm that shall never Dye, and to a Fire that shall never be extinguished. O miserable Bodies! O Wretched Souls! whom God shall cast into the midst of Hells furious flames, and against whom the Devils shall let flie all their Arrows, discharge all their Fury, and kindle all their Fires, and whom they will take pleasure to torment for ever and ever.

9. Some inquire what manner of Bodies the Children of God, and the Members of Christ shall have after they are risen from the Dead? I answer, that their substance shall be the same which they had before Death; they shall not be Phantisms or false appearances, but true humane Bodies, made up of flesh and bones; for we may say of all the Bodies of the faithful, as of that of our Saviour Christ, that the Resurrection will procure unto them a considerable Glory, which they never had before, but it shall not destroy their Nature and Manhood. They shall be able to speak in the Language of our Redeemer, *feel and see, a Spirit hath neither Flesh nor Bones, as ye see that I have.* All our Soul shall lose nothing of its Being, only it shall be perfectly cleansed from all Sin and Corruption, and sanctified in such a manner, that it will not be possible for it to entertain any vicious inclination; likewise there shall be no alteration in the essential part of our Bodies, but there shall be a wonderful alteration in regard of the qualities, for they shall cast off all corruption
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and mortality, and shall never be subject to Sickness, Pain, nor to the inconveniences that disturb it during this life. And if they have now any imperfection, they shall be perfectly freed; so that we may Justly say of the Celestial *Jerusalem*, that in it, no Blind nor Lame shall be admitted to enter, for all the Bodies of the Saints shall be so perfect and beautiful, that the least spot or blemish shall not be seen in them, 1 Sam. 6.

I know that Jesus Christ tells us in his Gospel, *Matt. 5. If thy right Eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is better that one of thy Members perish, than that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell; and if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for it is better that thou shouldest enter into life lame or maimed, than to have two feet and two hands, and to be cast into eternal Fire; Mark 4.* But these words are figurative; by them our Saviour would teach us, that for his sake and glory we must deny our dearest affections, and our most importunate lusts: and when these words should be taken in their literal sence, we must understand a Supposition, if it were possible to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven with one eye, lame, maimed, it would be far better to be admitted to that blessed estate, than to have a perfect and a whole body, and to be cast into the Torments of Hell. From thence we cannot conclude, that the faithful are to rise from their Graves with imperfect and deficient Bodies, for that is repugnant to an accomplished happiness, seeing that sin shall be utterly abolished and destroyed, the punishment of Sin shall continue no longer.

There are nevertheless some that believe, with several ancient Doctors of the Primitive Church, that the holy Martyrs shall bear about them the scars and other marks of their Sufferings, for the Name of Jesus, in the same manner as this glorious Saviour, after his Resurrection could shew the print of the Nails, that had fastened his feet and hands to the Cross, and in his side the hole that the Spear had made. They esteem such Marks glorious
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and honourable Scars; so that according to their judgement, the Martyrs shall be like to the generous and noble hearted Souldiers, who have received Wounds in the service of their Prince, which they bear about as undoubted expressions of their Courage. I shall not altogether contradict this opinion, for it is not contrary to the Analogy of Faith, but I dare not affirm it as a certain truth, for we cannot learn from the holy Scriptures, that represent these Blessed Martyrs, cloathed with long Robes, washed and whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, without making any mention of there former sufferings; Our Saviour he was pleased to preserve the Marks of his Sufferings, that he might convince St. *Thomas* of his unbelief, and that he may one day discover and shew them to those that have pierced him through. But from this instance, I cannot see how we can gather any consequence; we may safely say, either that the Martyrs shall have no such scars, or if they have, they shall bring no deformity to their Bodies, nor shall they deprive us of any Member or part required in us, to make us perfect: If it should be otherwise, we could not be entirely and perfectly happy. After the Resurrection, the Bodies of Gods Children shall have none of these imperfections that Sin hath brought into the World; they shall not feel any of the infirmities, unto which the Bodies of *Adam* and *Eve* were subject in the estate of their innocency, for their life was sensual and animal-like, disturbed with hunger, thirst and weariness, therefore they had need of nourishment and drink, and especially of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, to supply so much of their radical humor, as was decayed and consumed by their natural heat. I conceive also, that they stood in want of rest and sleep; and although God would have protected them from all dangerous accedents, if they had continued in their integrity; if we consider them in themselves, without any such protection, they might have been injured by fire and sword, and burned with the heat of the scorching Sun. But it shall be otherwise with the Bodies of the Righteous, after
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the Resurrection, they shall not be subject to any infirmity, they shall be free from pain, weariness, and from the sense of any displeasure, as the holy Spirit promiseth, they shall hunger nor thirst no more; the Sun shall not beat upon them, nor any heat incommode them. It is not to be doubted, but that a glorified Body shall enjoy all the perfections that a humane Body is capable of: and that the greatest and rarest Beauties on Earth, are but disform'd objects, in comparison of the Celestial, which shall never change nor fade away, no accident shall ever be able to destroy or diminish them. The years, ages, and thousand of ages, shall not imprint upon our glorious faces, the least wrinkle, we shall always be young and lusty, as a precious Stone that preserves its Luster and Beauty without alteration, and as the Sun that never decreaseth in light and heat. These glorified Bodies shall cast off all gross and heavy qualities that incline them to the Earth, so that they shall be more nimble than the Eagles, and shall be able to fly up as quick as the fire. *St. Paul* intends to teach us this truth, when he tells us, that this Body is sown an earthly and a sensual Body, but it shall rise again an heavenly and a spiritual Body; we are not so to understand these words, as to think that God will change them into Spirits, or into such uncomposed bodies, as are the Heavens, for they shall yet be made up of flesh and bones, and they shall have all the essential parts of an humane Body, as we have already taken notice; but I conceive that they are named spiritual and heavenly, because they shall have no more the gross and earthly qualities, and they shall live no more a Sensitive and an animal life. In a word, they shall need no more meat or drink, than the Stars and Celestial Bodies, no more than the holy Angels of God.

I confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended up into Heaven in a cloud, not because that a Cloud was necessary to uphold and keep up his glorious Body; for if in the estate of his infirmity and humiliation, this divine Body

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was able to walk upon the waves of the Sea, without sinking, by the assistance of his divine Nature, how much more since its glorification, shall it be able to ascend upon high, and to go whither he listeth? If the help of any Creature had been necessary to uphold him, he might have had Legions of Immortal Angels to carry him up, but Christ needed not to be assisted, neither by a Body, nor a Spirit, nor by any other Creature. This Cloud therefore that appeared at his Ascension, was no token of the infirmity of his humane Nature, it did rather manifest the glory and magnificence of his Divine Majesty, unto which this precious Body was united personally. God hath often revealed himself, attended by a Cloud, as upon Mount *Sina*, in the Ark of the Covenant, at the Dedication of *Solomons* Temple; therefore that Cloud in which God was pleased to discover himself, is stiled, *The Glory of God*, that is the Sign and visible expression of his Glorious Presence, and Divine Majesty. Let us therefore gather from hence, that the Cloud which attended upon the glorified Body of Jesus Christ, was no needful help to carry him up to Heaven, but as it were a Chariot of Triumph, to cause him to go with more glory and pomp. The Bodies of the Saints, after the Resurrection, shall shine and be full of glory; they shall not only have some superficial splendor upon their Countenance or Skin, as *Moses* when he had been with God forty days and forty nights in the Holy Mountain, but they shall shine within and without, as a true Diamond, that casts abroad on all sides its light and flames. So that it shall happen to them, as it happened to our Saviour upon Mount *Tabor*, for it is said, that his Garments became white as the Light. In the same manner, at the time of our Transfiguration, our bodies that are but the Garments of our Immortal Souls, shall be as clear as the Light, and as bright as the Celestial Globes. I speak here nothing, but what the Prophet *Daniel* saith before me, *Daniel* 12. *They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn man to righteousness,*

righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever. And our Saviour assures us, Matt. 23. That the Children of God shall shine in the Kingdom of their Father, as the Sun.

These glorified Bodies shall never corrupt nor putrify, but they shall be for ever uncorruptible. Therefore St. Paul assures us, that *the Corruptible must put on incorruption*; so that I may safely affirm, that their glory shall be more durable than that of the Sun, or of the Moon, or of the Stars; for although these Celestial Bodies never corrupt, out of any inward principle; although there can be no alteration happen to them, neither from their essential form, nor from the properties that come from it, nor from any other inherent quality, they shall nevertheless corrupt, out of an external principle, for the Almighty Hand of God which made them, shall change and alter them, as the royal Prophet tells us, in *Psalms 102. The heavens shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed*, 1 Pet. 5. Unto this, St. Peter doth very well agree, *The Heavens*, saith he, *shall pass away with a great noise*. Whereas the glorified Bodies shall never corrupt, neither by any internal principle, nor by their essential form, nor by the properties and accidents that flow from it, nor by any external cause, nor by any accident whatsoever that can be imagined, for the Almighty hand of God shall make them, never to marr them again. From hence it follows, that they shall Die no more, but shall continue Immortal, for with incorruption they must put on Immortality; therefore when our Saviour speaks of the estate of the glorified Saints, *Luke 20.* he saith, not only, that *they shall not Dye*, but that *they cannot Dye any more, because they shall be like the Angels, being the Children of the Resurrection*. In this consists the difference between them and those whom God hath raised up, already mentioned in the *Old and New Testamen.*

For they were forced to return to their sensual life, to eat and drink, and therefore they were again subject to corruption and Death; but at the day of the general Resurrection, *whatsoever is Mortal, shall be swallowed up by Life*; therefore St. Paul applies to this glorious day, the accomplishment of this Prophecy, *Death is swallowed up into Victory*: and he brings in these who shall be clothed with this Immortal Glory, braving Death and the Grave, in this triumphing Language, *O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave! where is thy Victory?*

In short, to make us sensible, that our Bodies shall put on all the richest and most noble qualities that can be imagined, and to express all in a word, the Holy Ghost assures us, that they shall bear the Image of the Son of God, and be made conformable to his glorious Body, St. Paul declares this Truth, in the 15 Chap. of the first of the *Corinth*. *The first Man, saith he, was of the Earth Earthly, the second Man was the Lord from Heaven; as is the Earthy, such are they that are Earthy; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are Heavenly; and as we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly.* And in *Philip*. 3. he saith, *we wait for the Lord Jesus from Heaven, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be like to his glorious Body*; from hence you may gather, Christians, that at the rebuilding of this little Temple of the Godhead, there shall happen no such thing, as at the rearing up of the Temple of *Jerusalem*; for when that was Rebuilding, at the return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, they that had seen the former Temple, and its wonderful glory, wept aloud, so that their weeping interrupted the others expressions of joy and gladness. At the Restauration of the Temple of our Bodies, nothing shall be heard but Songs of Triumph and Jubile. Such as have seen, with the eyes of Faith, Mans Body, as it was in the estate of its integrity, in the earthly Paradise, shall not be then sorry, that it hath been defaced by Sin, and destroyed by Death; they shall not be sorry for any thing that is passed; they shall not
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be able to wish for any increase of happiness and glory for the future, for at the very instant of its rising from the Grave, it shall be raised to its highest Splendor, Happiness, and Magnificence, so that it shall be truly said, *That the glory of this Second House, shall be greater than that of the First, Hag. 2.*

Now that we have treated sufficiently, of such as shall rise from their Graves, it remains, that we take a view of them, whose Bodies shall never be laid into the Dust, and who shall be alive at Christs coming down from Heaven; for that purpose, St. Paul informs us, *1 Cor. 15. Behold, I shew you a Mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall be all changed in a moment, at the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet; and he speaks in this manner to the Thessalcnians, 1 Thes. 4. For thus we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep, for the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God, and the Dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and we shall ever be with the Lord, wherefore comfort one another with these words, I know very well that St. Paul tells the Hebrews, that it is appointed unto all Men once to Dye. Therefore I conceive that this great change that shall be made in the Bodies of them that shall be then alive, shall be a kind of Death, for Christ will destroy and abolish altogether in them, all corruption and inclination to Mortality. And when he shall change the Bodies of the Reprobates, he will make them like to the other Reprobates, whom he shall fetch out of their Graves; he will make them Immortal, that they may be eternally tormented in Hell. But he will cause the Bodies of Believers then alive, to be like the other Believers, that they may all partake and enjoy the same glory and eternal Bliss.*

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Christians, in what condition soever you be in, seriously apply to your selves these Divine Consolations; you that are grieved to see your Bodies maimed and deprived of one of your Members, of your Eyes, Hearing, or of some other of your senses, whether you be so born, or whether such a privation hath happened unto you by a Disease, by a Mischance, or by any other Means, rejoyce and comfort your selves with this assurance, that you shall see one day this wretched Body restored to a perfect estate, to a perfection that shall never be lost; you that fret and vex your selves, to behold how old Age and Sicknes have disfigured your Bodies, what breaches and ruines they have caused in you; Comfort your selves in expectation of this glorious Resurrection, which shall supply this decayed and languishing Body with new strength and vigor, and adorn it with a perfect beauty and an eternal glory.

And you whom Death undermines, and intends shortly to lay in the Dust, grieve not at it, for you shall lose nothing at present, but you shall find it again at the great day of the Resurrection. When *Joseph* died, he commanded his Brethren, concerning his Bones, that they should carry them out of *Egypt* into the Land of *Canaan*. Now our Bones are the Bones of Jesus Christ, our true *Joseph*: Therefore he will command his Angels to gather them up safe, he himself will have a care to preserve them, at the great Morn of the Resurrection, he shall fetch them out of their Graves, as out of an *Egypt*, out of an House of bondage, and will carry them to his Celestial *Canaan*. When the Tabernacle was taken in pieces, the High-Priest did deliver every piece in charge to the Levites, so that when they were to set it up again, there was nothing wanting. Likewise our Saviour hath given in charge, and delivered by retail, every Member and part of our Bodies; these Tabernacles which he hath consecrated for himself to our Graves, therefore they shall all be found again at the Resurrection, without the least imperfection. These Tabernacles shall not only be found entire, but they shall

be beautified with a far greater Glory and Splendor than before.

There is none but would be glad to lay himself down to sleep in his Bed, and pull off his garments willingly, if he were certain to be more healthy, and to find his garments fresher and more beautiful in the Morning ; if he were persuaded, that instead of old rags, he were to cloath and put on a royal attire, and most magnificent garments. Who would not willingly go out of a pittiful Cabin, and forsake a miserable Lodge, which shall be one day changed into a Golden Palace, adorned with precious Stones ? Comfort thy self, believing Soul, and rejoyce in God thy Redeemer ; cast off willingly this Garment that is so incommodious and troublesome to thee ; forsake this wretched Body, undermined by sickness and diseases, and consumed by time. Sleep quietly in the Lord Jesus, and repose thy self in his Bosome, for when thou shalt wake again at the sound of the Archangels Trumpet, thou shalt find this garment whiter than Snow, and as bright as the Light ; grieve not to see this crasy dwelling fall to pieces and rot, for God shall build it up again with his own hands, and convert it into his Temple, and a pavillion of his glory : Thou mayst be certain, shortly to return again, and to find this woful lodge of Earth, become an heavenly Palace, purer than fine Gold, and brighter than the Diamonds, the Robes, and all the precious Stones. Weep not for thy beautiful eyes that are shut, nor for the rest of thy Senses that are lost, nor for the Members of thy Body that consume away one after another ; for with these same eyes that have lost, or shall shortly lose the sight of the day light, thou shalt behold a Divine Light that shall shine eternally in Heaven ; thou shalt behold the face of the King of Kings, and all the Glory and Magnificence of his Kingdom ; with these ears that are deaf, and that shall shortly be stopped, thou shalt hear with transports of Joy, the ravishing harmonies of the Saints, and the Songs of the Blessed Angels ; with this stammering Tongue, which is to
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lose the faculties of Speech; thou shalt sing with a loud voice the praises of Almighty God, in the glorious company of the Church triumphant; with these unsteady hands that can scarce hold any thing, thou shalt one day receive Immortal Palmes, and Golden Viols, which thou shalt never quit; with these feet that are dying, and that can scarce hold thee up, thou shalt follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and thou shalt walk about the Streets of the heavenly *Jerusalem*; and this same body that is going to rot, and to be turned to dust, shall one day shine as the Firmament, and as the Sun in its greatest splendor.

What desirest thou more, Christian Soul, for thy comfort? what addition can there be made to thine happiness? for thou art going to the fruition of eternal Joys, and of endless pleasures in Heaven. In the mean while, thy Body shall endure no pain nor grief; and God will shortly raise it up again from this deep sleep, that begins to dull thy senses and close thine eye-lids. Shortly God will publish the year of the great Jubile, all the Prisons of Death shall be then opened, and the Prisoners shall be set at liberty. Thou shalt shortly hear the sound of the last Trump that shall rouse thee out of the dust, and cause thee to appear in the presence of thy great Redeemer. Thou leavest a wretched Body, full of darkness and corruption, assaulted by Death on all sides, but it shall shortly be made uncorruptible, immortal, and adorned with Light and Glory.

Let therefore thy Heart rejoyce, thy Tongue be glad, and thy flesh rest in hope, for the Lord will not leave thee always in the Grave, he will not suffer thee to continue for ever in dust and corruption, he will not only discover to thee the ways of life, but he will shortly come down himself from Heaven for to lead thee thither.

When Death should be already upon thy lips, when she should be ready to lay thee in thy Grave, let not this disturb the quiet of thy Soul, nor the peace of thy

Conscience, let it not shake thy precious Faith that keeps thee up, nor drive thee from the Author of thy Blessed hope fixed in Heaven, where Jesus Christ is entered as thy forerunner; in short, when thy Body should be all covered with sores and boiles, as that of *Job*, *Job* 19. when it should all fall to pieces before thine eyes, let nothing hinder thee from crying out with this patient Man, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth, and though after my skin, worms destroy this Body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold and not another.* And with St. Paul, Phil. 3. *We look from Heaven for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

A Prayer and Meditation of a Christian, who being ready to depart out of the World, comforts himself with an assurance and expectation of the glorious Resurrection of his Body from the Dust.

O Eternal and Divine World! by whom all things were Created, and without whom was not any thing made that was made; Thou hast not only created our Souls, and fashioned our Bodies with thy skilful hands, but when they were miserably lost and corrupted with Sin, thou hast been pleased to redeem both our Souls and Bodies with thy most precious Blood, and to restore thy glorious Image in us. This wretched Body is but an Earthen Vessel; yet thou hast inclosed in it, the richest Treasuries of Life and Light. Thou hast appointed it to be the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and a noble Pavilion of the Godhead, to participate with the Soul in the eternal happiness of thy Kingdom. I feel my strength failing me, and this Earthly Tabernacle decaying every day, and every hour, so that I am certain that it shall shortly fall to dust. But Lord I am sufficiently comforted with the knowledge, that if the outward Man decays, the inward is renewed day by day; If this wretched Body falls down by death, thou shalt raise it up again at the general Resurrection. My Lord, and my God, thou art sufficiently able, for all power is given to thee in Heaven and in Earth, and in the depths of the Sea. As the Father raiseth and quickeneth the Dead, thou dost also quicken them whom thou hast chosen. Thou hast fashioned my Body of Dust, and created this Dust of nothing, and shalt not thou be able of the same dust, into which this my Body shall be turned by Death, to make and fashion it again? Thou hast by thine Almighty power, created my Soul, and infused it into this Body, and canst thou not return it again,

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when it shall please thee, to live for ever in a more blessed society than ever it hath been before? O Prince of Life, Death hath sufficiently felt thy great and overflowing power. It intended to swallow thee up, but thou hast swallowed it up in a glorious manner into Victory. Thou hast been dead, but thou art returned to life, and thou livest for ever and ever. And now thou holdest in thy hands the Keys of Death. Thou openest and shutest up thy black Dungeon at thy pleasure; Thou killest and makest alive, thou castest into the Grave, and fetchest up again. Lord Jesus, who art the Resurrection and the Life, as thou hast an ability to cause my Body to come out of the Dust, thou art willing and resolved to take it out again, for thou hast promised to awake with the sound of the Arch-angels Trump, and to lead away with thee all them that sleep in thee, and repose themselves upon thee; when thou shalt come from Heaven with thy powerful Angels, at the great day of thy Triumph, and at the Crowning of thy Spouse, all the Prisons of Death shall be opened, and the Prisoners set at liberty. It shall not be long, O Lord, before thou wilt cause the last Trumpet to sound, to publish and proclaim the great Day of Rest and Joy. Thou shalt then put us in possession of all the advantages which we have lost. Thou shalt command the Sea, the Earth and the Grave, to restore all the Bodies which they have swallowed up, and they shall readily obey thee. Thy mighty Word that Created the World and sustains it, shall be heard in our very Graves, and at that instant we shall go out to appear before thy dreadful Tribunal. We shall not go out in the same manner as Lazarus, with our winding-sheets about us; we shall leave in the Grave all tokens of our former infirmities. Thou shalt not only draw our Bodies out of their Tombs, but thou shalt make them more beautiful, more perfect and glorious than ever they were before; so that we are able to say for a truth, That the glory of this second House, shall be greater than the glory of the former, For thou shalt change this vile body, and make it like to thy glorious body; this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and whatsoever is mortal in us, shall be overcome

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and swallowed up by life. With these same languishing eyes I shall behold thee upon a Cloud of the Heavens, and a Throne of fire; with these ears that are going to be stopt, I shall hear the sound of the last Trump, and the Songs of the blessed Angels; with this Tongue that can scarce speak and move, I shall sing forth thine Eternal and Divine praises with the Church Triumphant; with these dying Hands I shall embrace and take hold of thee; with these feet that are already in the Grave, I shall follow thee whithersoever thou goest, and walk about the streets of the new Jerusalem; this same Body that is now dropping into the rotten Grave, shall be carried up into Heaven, to shine as the Stars, or as the Sun for ever and ever. O Lord, I am ready to depart out of this Tabernacle, there is nothing but a breath in my nostrils, the shadow of Death appears upon mine eye-lids, and my Soul is upon my lips, but I am fully perswaded, that in this flesh which shall be cast away to the worms, and left in a rotten Grave, I shall behold thy Glory and Magnificence, I shall see thy face, and shall be satisfied with thy likeness when I shall awake again. Amen.

CHAP. XXIV.

The Twelfth Consolation, the Destruction of Death, and the Eternal and most Blessed Life which we shall enjoy both in Soul and Body after our Resurrection.

WE have sufficiently treated of that happiness which is prepared for our Souls at their departure from the Bodies, and of the glorious Resurrection promised to these Bodies, when Jesus Christ shall come down from Heaven in his Glory to judge the quick and the dead. It seems that we have nothing more to say, but as *Moses* when he had made the Ark of *Shittim* wood, and lined it with fine Gold, he put round about a Crown of Gold upon the Top. In the same manner now that we have declared unto you the incorruption and future glory of our Bodies, which are to be look'd upon as sacred Arks, where Gods Majesty shall dwell for ever. Now that we have shown how by the Almighty and gracious power of God, they shall become more uncorruptible than the *Shittim* wood, and more glorious than fine Gold; I will now with Gods assistance draw about them a Crown more precious than the purest Gold, and richer than all the Jewels in the World; I mean, to Crown this work, and intend to end it with as perfect a Picture as I am able to draw of the Eternal Glory and Happiness which we expect to enjoy both in Soul and Body after our Resurrection: But first, I must say something of the entire and perfect destruction of all our Enemies, and represent unto you the overthrow and the fatal end of Death.

When Jesus Christ shall appear again to Judge the World in Righteousness, he shall sit upon a glorious and most splendid Throne. *Solomons* magnificent Throne, was but its shadow and imperfect Type, he shall then send forth

forth his Angels, who shall gather together the Elect, with the sound of a Trumpet from the four parts of the World, and from one end of the Heavens to the other. The sight of this glorious Saviour, shall then fill us with an unspeakable joy, and cause us to burst forth into this Language, *Isa. 25. Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us ; This is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his Salvation.* But when all the kindreds of the Earth shall behold this glorious King, in the Clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory, they shall lament and strike their Breasts in despair, they shall call to the Mountains and Rocks, *Revel. 6. Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?*

It is then that the Lord shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and shall manifest the thoughts of the heart, with the most secret contrivances. The Books shall be opened, not only of the guilty Consciences, where Satans Image and Deeds shall be engraven, but also the other Books, where God himself hath written with his own finger, all our actions, words, and our most secret thoughts. All Men shall be judged according to the things written in the Books. St. *John* declares this in the 20 of the *Revelations*. *I saw a great white Throne, and him that sate on it, from whose face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was no place for them. And I saw the Dead small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life, and the Dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their works.* Unto this St. *Paul* agrees, *we must all appear before the judgement Seat of Christ, that every one may receive in his Body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*

There are three sorts of persons that are to stand before this glorious Tribunal, such as never had any other Teacher but Nature, who were not acquainted with any other Works

Works of God, but of Creation and Providence; for God hath not left himself without witness in doing good.

The second sort have been assisted with a Divine Revelation from above, under the Law, which hath distinctly taught them what Works are pleasing to God. These may have heard something of a *Messias* from the ancient Prophets, they may have seen his pourtraiture in the Types and Shadows of *Moses's* Ordinances.

The other sort have had the Grace of God clearly and plainly revealed unto them, unto whom our Lord Jesus Christ hath brought Life and Immortality to light, through the Gospel. There are none of these persons, if they have lived in impiety and debauchery, and are dead in impenitency, that shall be able to excuse themselves in this dreadful day of Judgement. But some are more guilty than others, therefore they shall be condemned to more grievous Tortures.

The knowledg that God hath bestowed upon Man, hath been darkened by the Prince of darkness, but it hath not been totally extinct; and that Law which God hath engraven in the Soul of Man, hath not been altogether blotted out, but there remains yet some relicks. So that there is no Man living that can affirm, that he hath done all the good deeds which his Conscience was perswaded that he ought to perform, and that he hath omitted all the evil acts of which his Conscience did convince him. They who have lived and are dead without any Law of God revealed unto them, shall be judged without the Law. Such shall be condemned for having taken pleasure in extinguishing the remains of their natural light, and in smothering the good and rational dictates of their Consciences. They shall be condemned because they have abused Heavens favors, and filled themselves with Gods good Creatures, without returning to him due thanks; and because they have not meditated as they ought, upon so many stately and noble works of nature, nor learned by that means to know God, who hath left in these works, so many impresses

impresses of his eternal Power and Godhead, and because that knowing God, they have not glorified him as God, this St. Paul teacheth in these words, *As many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law; for when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing Witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another in the day when God shall judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel, Rom. 2.*

They that profess to know the Law, shall be judged by the Law; such as have already heard the Thunders of Mount Sinai, they shall one day feel the Thunderbolts. They shall understand by experience, what it is to rebel against God, and to draw upon themselves and their guilty heads, the dreadful curses of Gods Law, *Deut. 17. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, Gal. 3.* There is no doubt but that the Jews upon whom Moses and the Prophets have spent so many fruitless exhortations to live well, shall be punished with more grievous Torments than the poor Savages, unto whom God never sent any Messuage, who never had any acquaintance with the Commonwealth of Israel, being strangers from the Covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the World, *Eph. 2.* For that servant who knoweth his Masters will and doth it not, shall be beaten with more stripes than him who knoweth it not, *Luke 12.*

But no people upon Earth have cause to expect and dread a more severe sentence, than the wicked Christians, that make profession of knowing God, and believing in Jesus Christ, who nevertheless deny him by their Works, and trample under feet the riches of his Grace; how can it otherwise be, for such as have heard the Gospel Preached, who have seen Jesus Christ as it were Crucified before

their

their eyes, and yet have made no advantage of all this; they ought to be punished in another manner than the bare Auditors of *Moses*, that never saw the *Messias* but afar off, and in the shadows of the Ceremonial Law. Take notice of these Divine expressions of *St Paul* to the *Hebrews*, *He that despised Moses Law died without Mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was Sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence saith the Lord; and again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Therefore when *St. Paul* speaks of such as obey not the Gospel, he saith, *That they shall be punished with eternal punishments from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power.* And our Saviour teacheth us, that such as reject so great Salvation, shall be punished more grievously than the most abominable Sinners unto whom it was never declared. Therefore when he sends forth his Apostles to Preach, he tells them, *whosoever shall not receive you, and hear your words, when ye depart out of that House or City, shake off the dust of your feet; verily I say unto you, it shall be more tollerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of Judgment, than for that City.* Likewise, when he upbraids the Cities which had not believed in him, for their unbelief and impenitency, because they were not converted at the Preaching of his Gospel, and at the sight of his glorious Miracles, *Matth 11.* he tells them, *Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tollerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of Judgement than for you. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell; for*

if

if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day; but I say unto you, that it shall be more tollerable for the Land of Sodom in the day of Judgement than for thee.

The great Judge of the World, shall place at his left hand all wicked Souls which have lived without any fear of God, and without expressing Charity to the Members of his Mystical Body, and shall pronounce to them this dreadful Sentence, *Depart from me ye Cursed, to Eternal Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels, for I was an hungry, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; sick and in Prison, and ye visited me not; verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.* But the faithful who have declared their Faith by a good and holy Life, and by works of Charity and Mercy, he will place at his right hand, and in the Presence of God and all his holy Angels, he shall say unto them, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the beginning of the World, for I was an hungrey, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye cloathed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me; verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

There be some that make this question, what sign shall preceed immediatly before, or accompany the coming of Christ in the World? Our Saviour hath given occasion to this demand; for when he speaks of the things that are to happen about the time of his glorious Coming, he saith, *That the Sun shall be darkned, that the Moon shall not give light, that the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and that the powers of the Heavens shall be shaken, and that then shall appear in Heaven the Sign of the Son of Man.*

Some imagine, that this Sign of the Son of Man, is the Sign of the Cross, which shall appear in the air. This opinion

opinion in it self is harmless, but in regard that is hath no foundation in holy Scripture, I am not to insist upon it. Others believe, that it shall be the Fire with which Jesus Christ shall burn the Earth, dissolve the Elements, and punish Unbelievers. This conceit is grounded upon St. Pauls words to the *Thessal.* *2 Thes. 1.* *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Others conceive, that this Sign of the Son of Man, is nothing else but the Body of Jesus Christ, bearing and discovering the print of the nails in his hands and feet, and the wound of the Spear in his side. This they gather from these words of the first of the *Revel.* *Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which peirc-ed him.* There be others yet, that take it in another sence, and that believe that there shall be no particular Sign, but that we must understand by this Sign of the Son of Man, all those things which shall declare the end of the World, and the coming of Jesus Christ to judge the quick and the dead. If we take the words in this manner, there will be an excellent allusion to that which is commonly practised; when Kings and Princes make their publick entrance into great Cities, for their coming in is proclaimed by the sound of a Trumpet, and by the attendants of Majesty, a Train and Pomp that usually accompanies it. In the same manner, the glorious coming of Jesus Christ, shall be known by the sound of the Archangels Trumpet, and by all the Signs and wonderful alterations which shall suddenly happen in the Heavens. This last opinion is very likely, and the former advanceth nothing contrary to the analogy of Faith. Therefore in harmless matters, which are controverted, and not plainly decided by the Word of God, we leave to every pious Soul, a liberty to chuse that which it likes best.

Some inquire further, If it be true, that the Souls of the Damned

Damned go down into Hell immediately after their egress out of the Body, and if they are tormented in a Fire that goeth not out, whereof the heat never lessens, as the Christian Religion teacheth, and as we may say in the Parable of the rich Glutton; doth it not follow, that these wretches are already judged? How is it therefore that the Son of God will judge them again at the last day, and send them to an everlasting burning prepared for the Devil and his Angels? I answer First, That it is no absurdity to say, that one Sentence shall be pronounced twice, for Men are wont to read the Sentence of Doom to the Prisoner, before he is taken out of Prison, afterwards the same Sentence is published before all the people, at the time of execution: Likewise, when the Souls of the Wicked go out of their wretched Bodies, God pronounces to them the Sentence of his Death, But when Jesus Christ shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory; he shall publish the same Sentence before all the Men of the World, and all the Angels of Heaven. Besides, that Sentence was never pronounced, but to the Soul, but then it shall be declared both to the Soul and Body, and both together shall be sent to the everlasting burning, from whence they shall never be reprieved. From hence therefore Christians, you may gather, that there are three degrees of Punishments or torments to the Wicked; for in this Life they have a Worm that gnaws their Bowels and Hearts, and a kind of Hell that torments their Consciences. At the going of their Souls out of the World, they are cast headlong into the Eternal flames of Hell, where they suffer unspeakable torments; at that time their Bodies are senseless in their Graves, as the Bodies of the righteous. But at this last and dreadful day of Judgment, as the Grave shall restore all the Dead Bodies, Hell, which is the place designed for the Torment of the Damn'd, shall give up all the Souls that are tormented in its flames, and these cursed Souls shall be remitted to their miserable Bodies to suffer the pangs of an eternal Death, *Revel. 20.* Thus they shall be cast in Body and Soul into the bottomless pit, where there is weeping

ing and gnashing of teeth. At that time the Beast, the false Prophet, and all the Enemies of God and of his Church, shall be cast alive into the Lake burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second Death, *Revel. 19. 10, 11.* And when all these Offenders shall be executed, the Executioners themselves shall be punished for their Crimes; when the Damned shall be cast into eternal Tortures, the Devils and infernal furies shall be sent after them; as it is said, *The Devil who seduced the Nations, shall be cast into the lake of fire and Brimstone, where the Beast and the false Prophet are, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever, Revel. 20.* What a dreadful sight is it to behold all those Roaring Lions, those furious Dragons in their rage, vomiting forth fire and flames! What a joyful spectacle shall this be to the Children of God, to look upon these infernal Devils, bound fast with those Chains which they shall never be able to break and shut up in this bottomless pit, out of which they shall never be released!

Our Lord shall cast into this Lake of fire and brimstone, and shut up in this bottomless pit, not only the Devil and his Angels, the Beast and the false Prophet, and generally all wicked Souls and Unbelievers, but he shall cast therein also Death and the Grave, or rather, he shall abolish them for ever. As *Joshua*, when he conquered the Kings of the *Amorites*, he never killed them, until such time as he had overcome all his Enemies. Likewise, our Lord Jesus Christ, our true *Joshua*, hath encountered with Death upon the Cross, and overcome it by his Resurrection, but he will not destroy it altogether until the last day, when he shall come to judge the World. Then to perfect all his glorious victories, he shall destroy this last Enemy, this destroyer of his Brethren, and of his Members, so that *Death shall be no more.* It shall be no more for the wicked, they shall seek it in vain to be freed from their torments. It shall fly away from them as a shadow, that departs and is no more to be found. Death shall be no more for Gods Children, for it shall never disturb their Rest and Happiness.

If the old Serpent could enter into Paradise, we should fear his temptations and inflamed Darts; and if Death did continue in its Empire and Command, we should dread its approaches; but then it shall not have the least power, it shall be totally abolished; all the living shall become immortal: And although God will not destroy the Being, nor take away the malice of the Devil; yet to us he shall be as if he were not, for he shall never be able to break his Chains, nor to escape out of his Prison; and between him and us there shall be depths that can never be filled: So that as *Moses*, when he cast his Eyes upon *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* who pursued the frightened *Israelites*, he told them, *Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* Likewise, when we think upon Satan, and all his infernal Armies that pursue you, we may say with confidence, settle your minds, Christian Souls, and with the Eye of Faith behold the Salvation of the Lord; for these hellish furies that have persecuted us so long, shall be reduced to that estate, that they shall not be able to do you the least displeasure, or to give you any apprehension; God is going to drown them in the Red Sea of his wrath, and to shut them up for ever in the bottomless Pit of his just Revenge: So that as in the Heavenly Paradise there shall be neither pain nor sorrow, nor grief, nor crying, nor sighs heard; Likewise, there shall never be any fear nor fright, nor the least alarm, but we shall live there in a settled Peace and quiet for ever.

It is reported of the *Macedonians*, that they wept for joy when they beheld their King *Alexander* the Great, seated in the Throne of *Darius*, and trampling under Feet, the Pride and Empire of *Persia*. But how exceeding great shall our joy be, when we shall behold Jesus Christ our great Monarch, sitting upon

the Throne of God, and trampling under feet the pomp of the World, crushing the Red Dragon and all the tyrannical powers of Hell. The Glory of *Alexander* vanished away with his breath. Death destroyed all his Trophies; but our Lord shall triumph over Death it self; It shall be the last act of his Eternal Justice, to destroy the destroyer and murderer from the beginning.

At that time there shall be no more enemies to encounter with, no evils to be feared, neither shall there be any Advantages to be desired, nor Honours to be expected, for God will cast us into the bottomless Ocean of the most Divine Pleasures, and shall raise us up to the highest Glory that our Nature shall be capable of. This Happiness and this Glory shall be infinite in regard of its durance. It shall not be like to the Pomp and Magnificence of the Kings and Princes of the World, which vanisheth away in an instant; nor like to the brightness of *Moses* Face, which departed with his life; nor like the transfiguration of Christ upon mount *Tabor*, which soon disappeared; for when it shall have continued as many hundred ages as there are Stars in the Firmament, it shall then but begin and appear in its rising, so that there we may have just cause, and more reason than *St. Peter*, to say, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* There is no place in the world so pleasant and delightful, but at last one shall be weary to continue in it; nor company so amiable and sweet, but becomes tedious in time; nor pleasure so ravishing, but grows into distast. The greatest persons on earth sigh under the burden of their greatness; the brightness of their Glory dazles them: When nothing troubles them, they are troubled of their own accord, and the most magnificent Triumphs disturb and weary them: Oft-times their Heart groans in the midst of the greatest rejoycings, and of the publick applauses; they think themselves more unhappy than those
who

who envy their apparent happiness; for all that shines is not Gold; the most beautiful Roses are not without their prickles, and many times they hide dangerous Serpents.

As the Glory and Happiness of Paradise is infinite, in regard of its durance, so in respect of its Dignity and Excellency; for God will not only satisfy all our desires, and answer all our expectations, but he will also give unto us, above all that we can ask or think.

Shall I undertake to paint out unto you this Glory and perfect Happiness? When *St. Paul* speaks of these Evangelical Mysteries, he assures us, that they are things that the Eye of Man hath never seen, that his Ear hath never heard, and that never enter'd into his Heart, *1 Cor. 2.* If this is true of the Doctrine, which declares this Glory and Eternal Happiness; how are we able to comprehend that Glory and Happiness itself? therefore the same Apostle tells us in another place, *That God worketh in us abundantly, above that we are able to ask or think, Ephes. 3.* I cannot boast of having spoken with God face to face, as *Moses, Numb. 11.* of having been ravished, as *St. Paul, into the third Heaven, 1 Cor. 12.* God hath not transported me up as *St. John, into the Celestial Jerusalem*; neither hath he delivered to me, as to his Holy Angels, a Reed to measure the Holy City. But when I should have enjoyed these Glorious privileges, this Divine Entertainment, these supernatural Elevations, when I should have walked about, and taken a full view of the Celestial *Jerusalem*, when I should have been in the company of the *Seraphims*, that fly about God's Throne, when I should have beheld God face to face, although I were the most eloquent of all Men, and did speak with the tongues of Angels, and had in my hand the Pencil of an Arch-Angel, I should not dare to undertake to represent this exceeding great Glory,

nor to paint out unto you the brightness of that Heavenly Light, whereof the least beam is able to dazle me. St. *Paul* had been near the body of this great Light, he had beheld the Riches and Glory of Paradise, yet he confesseth that they be things unutterable, not to be expressed by any tongue.

But as those who cannot cast their eyes directly to look upon the Sun, because that it dazles them with its exceeding great Light, behold its Body with more ease and leasure in the Water, or in a Looking-Glass. Thus shall we consider and look upon the Images which God himself hath expressed for us in his Holy Word, of this Divine brightness of Heaven, which we are not able otherwise to comprehend: for God hath dealt with us, as a Father doth with his young Babes, who babbles with them, and represents to them the light of the Sun, with a black Coal. Or as the Astrologers, who represent the Heavenly Constellations by the Figures of Birds, of four-footed Beasts, and of creeping things.

For nothing can enter into our understanding, but by the door of our Sences, therefore Spiritual and Celestial things, are represented under the Notions of Corporal and Earthly Enjoyments, which we passionately love; and because there is not one thing here below that can express unto us the Glory and Happiness of Paradise; so many perfections are not to be found in one only thing: Therefore the Holy Ghost gathers together all the Excellencies, Riches, and Beauty, scattered about in the inferior Creatures, and borrows the Ideas and Notions of those things that are rarest and most glorious, and that give us the greatest pleasure and satisfaction, to represent unto us Heavens Glory.

To begin in the first place with the Word *Paradise*; it signifies a delightful and a pleasant Garden; it is often made use of to express to us the Joys and Happiness

ness of the life to come, and to make us sensible, that what we have lost by *Adam*, is restored to us by *Jesus Christ*, our Lord and Saviour, who is goodness it self, shall bestow upon us another *Eden*, another Garden of pleasure, watered with Living Water; in the midst of it is the Tree of Life, that brings forth its Fruits every Month: Instead of an earthly Paradise, subject to change, we shall find an Heavenly and an unchangeable Paradise. The earthly Paradise is no more to be seen, it is thought that it was swallowed up and destroyed by the Waters and Deluge; but the Heavenly Paradise can never be destroyed by the most furious Fire, nor by the most swelling Waves. It is above all the Winds, and Storms, and Tempests; therefore *St. Peter* assures us, *That it is an incorruptible inheritance that fadeth not away.* It hath no need of an elemental Water, for it is watered every where with the River of living Water, that proceeds from the Throne of God and the Lamb. And whereas Cherubims, armed with a Flaming Sword, stood at the entrance of the Earthly Paradise, to hinder *Adam* from approaching near to the Tree of Life, and from gathering of its Fruits; Now whole Legions of Cherubims are to carry us up upon their wings, to the true Tree of Life, which stands in the midst of the Heavenly Paradise; and *Jesus Christ* himself, the Prince of all the Angels, of all the Cherubims and Seraphims, promiseth to admit us to partake of its delicious Fruits, by these blessed words, *To him that shall overcome, I will give him to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*

It is the common custom of Men, to have an high esteem of beautiful and great Cities, whereof the buildings are stately, and the Inhabitants many. Therefore the Jews were wont to boast of *Jerusalem*, and to call it *The City perfect in Beauty, the Joy of the whole Earth.* Therefore the Holy Ghost represents unto us, the Glo-

ry and Happiness of Heaven, by a City which he names *Jerusalem*. And St. Paul, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, mentions the same comparison; for when he had said, *That Abraham by Faith sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Countrey, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise*; he adds immediately after, *For he looked for a City which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God*; and a little after, *God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City*, Heb. 11. And in the 12 Chapter of the same Epistle, he speaks to Believers in this manner, *Ye are come to mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels*. And elsewhere, *We have no continuing City here below, but we seek one to come*, Heb. 13. 14.

God is pleased, not only to describe unto us our future Paradise, under the general notion of a City, and of *Jerusalem*, but he declares unto us its Heavenly Beauty, its Glory and Magnificence; you cannot find a richer and a more excellent Image than that of St. *John*, who himself had been a spectator of the new *Jerusalem*, and had beheld all its rarities and wonders; for when the Angel, who had in his hand a Golden Reed, to measure this Glorious City, had said unto him, *Come, I will shew thee the Spouse, the Wife of the Lamb*: He carried him in the Spirit to an high Mountain, from whence he had a prospect of that great and Holy City *Jerusalem*, which came down from Heaven from God, decked as a Spouse prepared for her Husband, having the Glory of God and his Light. This faithful witness assures us, that its Buildings, and the Streets of this blessed City, were all of fine Gold, as bright as Chrystal; its Foundations were of Precious Stone; its Twelve Gates were Twelve Pearls; at each of them stood an Angel of God. This Holy City hath no need of the light of the Sun, or of the light of the Moon,

Moon, for the Light of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof; there is no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple of it.

It is our delight to abide in stately and Magnificent Houses, and in rich and glorious Palaces; Therefore Paradise is expressed unto us by a Dwelling, and by a Palace which God himself hath built with his own Hands. This is the Picture that the Royal Prophet represents unto us in *Psal. 65.* when he speaks of *God's House, and of the Holy place of his Palace.* And *St. Paul* doth the like in *1 Corin. 5.* when he saith, *We know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And our Saviour, when he was ready to leave the World, he comforts his Apostles in this manner, *In my Fathers House there are many Mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.* And *St. John* heard a mighty voice from Heaven, saying, *Behold, the Tabernacle of God with Men, he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be their God with them.*

Every one desires to be rich, there be some that esteem it their chief Happiness; therefore the Holy Ghost represents the Happiness of Heaven, under the notion of Riches and Treasures: our Saviour himself speaks of it in this manner, in the 6th of *St. Matthew,* *Lay not up for your selves Treasures upon Earth, where Moth and Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break through and steal, but lay up for your selves Treasures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through nor steal.* Therefore when the Holy Ghost describes Heavens Glory, and mentions Gold, Pearls, and Precious Stones, it hath a regard to this consideration.

And because Men are for the most part desirous of Honours, Greatness, and Dignities, and that there is

nothing in the world more esteem'd than Scepters and Crowns; therefore the Glory of Heaven is express'd by a Kingdom, by Thrones, Crowns, and Triumphs. Our Saviour speaks in this language to his Apostles, *To you all who have continued with me in my afflictions, I appoint a Kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me*, Luke 22. In another place, he speaks to all his Church in general, *Fear not little flock, for it is your Fathers pleasure to give you the Kingdom*, Luke 20. And at the last day he will say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World*, Matth. 25. And to the Angel of his Church in Smyrna, and all faithful Souls, this Divine Saviour makes this promise, *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Revel. 2. And to the Angel of the Church of Laodicea, *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*, Revel. 3. And St. Paul tells us, *That we run to obtain an uncorruptible Crown*, 1 Cor. 6. And when he saw himself at the end of his Race, he cries out, *I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing*, 2 Tim. 4. And St. James speaks in the same Language, *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*, James 1. Finally, we read that the glorified Saints have Palms in their Hands, and Crowns of Gold upon their Heads, and in their Songs of Praise, they speak thus to our Saviour, *Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God, Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the Earth*, Revel. 4.

The great Men of the World delight in gorgeous Apparel, some in perfum'd Garments, therefore the Holy Ghost condescends to this weakness of Man, and promiseth in Heaven, Robes more flagrant than the perfumes of *Arabia*; he promiseth a Garment whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Light it self. And *Solomon* when he considers his Spouse, as the Type of the Church, he saith, *The Kings daughter is full of glory within, her cloathing is of wrought Gold, she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle work.*

And when God himself speaks of the glory of his Church, which he begins now, and will consummate hereafter, he saith, that he adorned her with Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, that he hath cloathed her with fine Linnen, with Silk, and Needle-work; therefore the Church speaks in this manner, I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath cloathed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robes of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels. And if you take notice of such as stand before the Throne of God, and in the presence of the Lamb, that worship him day and night in his Temple, you shall find them cloathed with long Robes, whitened in the Blood of the Lamb. Look also upon that Glorious Woman of the *Revelations*, the true Type and representation of the Church, and you shall see her cloathed with the Sun, and a Crown of twelve Stars upon her Head. In a word, hearken to the Song of the glorified Saints, and you shall hear them speaking to one another, *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour to God, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready, and to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine Linnen, clean and white, for the fine Linnen is the righteousness of Saints.*

Men commonly love good cheer, to partake of sumptuous Feasts, therefore the Heavenly Delights are represented to us under the notion of rare Meats, and exquisite Drinks, of Noble Feasts, and Magnificent Banquets. In this manner, the Royal Prophet speaks of them in the 36 Psalm, *How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings, they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy pleasures.* And in the 65 Psalm, *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts, he shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy Temple.* And the Prophet Isaiah speaks in the same language, *In this Mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people, a Feast of fat things, a Feast of Wine on the Lees, of fat things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees, well refined.* This consideration causeth a Doctor in the Gospel to say, *Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of Heaven.* And our Saviour himself saith, that many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Ahasuerus's Feast continued 180 days, but the Feast of which we shall be partakers in Heaven, and which hath been preparing from the foundation of the World, shall continue for all Eternity.

Of all Feasts, such as are prepared for Nuptial Solemnities are most esteem'd, when they are for Kings and Princes of the Earth, for in such occasions there are the greatest and the most extraordinary rejoycings; therefore the happiness of Heaven is expressed by a Marriage, our Saviour himself makes use of this comparison in the 22 Chapter of St. Matthew, *The Kingdom of God, saith he, is like unto a King which made a Marriage for his Son.* This caused the glorified Church to speak in this manner, *Let us rejoyce and be glad, and give*
Glory

Glory to the Lord our God, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come. Finally, the Holy Ghost hath Commanded to Write and Record these words for ever, *Blessed are those that are called to the Marriage-Feast of the Lamb.*

Some persons are very much delighted with the sweet and pleasant Consorts of Musick; Therefore the Holy Ghost to signify unto us, that in Heaven there shall be all manner of pleasures and nothing wanting, tells us, that about God's Throne, millions of Angels and glorified Saints shall sing forth the Divine Praise. Besides, it acquaints us with the substance of their Heavenly Songs; when *Isaiab* mentions these wonderful *Seraphims*, That fly round about God's Glorious Throne, he saith, *That they cry one to another, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.* And when *St. John* speaks of those glorified Saints, he saith, that they stand before this Magnificent Throne, playing with their Harps, and singing a new Song, that is to say, a most rare and excellent Song, and that they have always in their mouths the song of *Moses* and of the Lamb, and that Heaven it self resounds with their Sacred *Hallelujah's*, which signifies, *Praise God*, or, *Set forth the praises of God.* There is no ingenuous Soul but loves Peace and Rest, for this cause, the Glory and Happiness of Paradise is represented under this lovely and pleasant Notion, as in the 4th. Chapter of the *Hebrews*, *For we which believed, do enter into rest, as he said, as I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; for if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day; there remaineth therefore a Rest to the People of God, for he that is entered into his Rest he also hath ceased from his own Works, as God did from his; Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest.* This causeth old *Simeon* to cry out, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.* Finally, the Holy City is called *Jerusalem*, which signifies a *Vision of Peace*; And God himself makes this promise, Behold,

Behold, I will extend peace to her, like a River, *Isa. 66. Phil. 4.* Wherefore if the Peace which God grants to believing Souls in this life, surpasseth all understanding, what may we judge shall be the full enjoyment of an Eternal Peace in the Kingdom of Heaven? the tongues of Men and Angels is not able to express its Dignity and Excellency.

Lastly, Because Men are lovers of Pleasures, Delights, and Pomp, and that the most part seek for nothing but how to drive away their sorrows, and to recreate themselves with pastimes; Therefore the felicities of Paradise are represented by Rejoycings, Pleasures, and Eternal solemnities, as in the 36. *Psalm, thou shalt cause them to drink of the River of thy pleasures.* And in the 126. *Psalm, They that sow in Tears shall reap in Joy*; And God himself speaking of that most blessed time, saith, *Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind, but be you glad and rejoyce for ever, in that which I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoycing, and her People a joy.* Therefore when the Holy Ghost represents the condition of the Glorified Saints, he doth not only say, that God will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and that there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, nor labour, nor pain, nor grief, but he adds over and above, that in their mouths there shall be Songs of Praise, and upon their Heads, an Eternal joy and gladness, like to a precious Crown, which shall never be taken from them; for this cause they call so earnestly upon one another, *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give glory to the Lord our God, Revel. 19.*

All our senses shall partake in these Heavenly and Everlasting Pleasures; our Eyes shall behold with transports of joy, the sacred countenance of our Redeemer, the Riches and wonderful Beauty of his Palace, the Glory and Magnificence of his Empire; our Ears shall be delighted with the Musick of the blessed Saints,
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and with the Tunes of the Angels and of the Church Triumphant; our Smelling shall receive the sweet perfumes of our Bridegroom, whose Garments are of Myrrh, and whose Vine, always blossoming, gives a good smell; our Palat shall taste the Bread of Angels, the hidden Manna, the Fruits of the Tree of Life, the Waters issuing forth to everlasting Life, and the new Wine of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Hands shall embrace the Saviour of the World, and with our Feet we shall walk about the streets of that golden City, the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, *Revel. 14.*

Although I speak to you in this manner, I am persuaded, *Christian Souls*, that you understand very well that these expressions, and such like, are not to be understood in a literal Sence, and that they are but dark Shadows and imperfect Images of the advantages of the life to come. You have not forgot what *St. Paul* saith, That they are things which Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, and which never entred into the heart of Man, which God hath prepared for them that love him, *1 Cor. 2.* And that this great God whose Riches are inexhaustible, doth in us abundantly, above what we are able to ask or think, *Eph. 3.* so that when you see before you all the most Beautiful, Amiable, Glorious, and excellent things of the World; you may say in your selves, without doubt, the Glory and Happiness of Heaven is something more than all this, for it is elevated so much above all Earthly enjoyments, and surpasseth so much all the thoughts and conceits of Man, that it is not possible to describe it in its own Colours, nor to fancy it really as it is.

Think not therefore, *Christian Souls*, to meet in Heaven with a Paradise, something like to your Gardens; nor with Flowers, like to such as adorn your pleasant Walks and Fields; nor Fruits like to such as hang upon your Trees; you may be assured, that God will discover

cover things infinitely more pleasant and delightful, and more lasting. Fancy not such a City, built up as ours is, where Gold, Silver, Pearls, and precious Stones are to be seen: you may expect something more Noble and Magnificent, than all the richest and most stately Cities of the World; God will cause you to see, not only the beauty of Silver, the purity of Gold, the whiteness of Pearls, and the brightness of precious Stones; but you shall discover something more beautiful, purer, whiter, brighter, and something more surprizing than any Earthly thing. Think not to receive any material Crown, or to ascend up upon Thrones, like to those of Kings and Princes, you may justly fancy something more Glorious, and more lasting.

I am also perswaded, Christians, that you expect not in Heaven, to find Tables covered, as those of the rich Worldlings; nor to glut your selves with a Feast, like that of Nuptials of Earthly Princes, without doubt, your Faith hath an eye to something more Heavenly and Glorious; Your Soul hungers for more exquisite Dainties, and is athirst for more delicious and sweeter Drinks. You are too well instructed, to think to live in Heaven an animal and a sensual Life; Such a gross conceit, becomes only the Impostor *Mahomet*, and his fond Paradise.

In this life that we lead upon Earth, there are two things which chiefly discover our natural Infirmity; The first is our eating and drinking, absolutely necessary to make up the breaches that labour and the natural heat do make, which spend and feed upon the radical Humor, which serves to our life, as Oil to a Lamp. The other is Marriage, appointed by God for the continuance and propagation of the humane Race. But in Heaven our life shall be altogether Angelical, Spiritual, and Supernatural; our Bodies shall be no more subject to corruption, nor to any alteration; they shall want no more food than the Stars do at present,

present, and the rest of the Celestial Bodies; Therefore the Holy Ghost speaks expressly, That we shall neither hunger nor thirst, that the Sun shall not burn, nor any other heat trouble us. That is to say, as we shall never be inclinable to eat or drink, the most burning heat, and the most furious Flames shall have no power to hurt our Bodies, when they shall have cast off all sensual and earthly qualities, and instead of them it shall be clothed with Light and Glory; therefore at that time there shall be no need of propagating the Species, or of multiplying the Persons by Marriage, for we shall not be then subject to earthly Passions, and the number of the Elect shall be compleat; the Congregation of the Saints shall be full, and the building of the Church shall be perfectly made up; therefore our Saviour Jesus Christ assures us, That in the Kingdom of Heaven they shall neither take nor give in Marriage, but that we shall be like the Angels of God, we shall enjoy the light of their understanding, the Holiness of their Wills, and the Purity of their affections.

When the Queen of *Sheba* saw the Glory and State of King *Solomon*, and heard all his excellent Discourses, she was extraordinarily surprized, and wondred; therefore she told this great Prince, *It was a true report that I heard in mine one Land, of thy Acts, and of thy Wisdom; howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and behold, the half was not told me, thy Wisdom and Prosperity exceedeth the same which I heard; happy are thy Men, happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and that bear thy Wisdom. I am perswaded, Believing Souls, that something like to this shall happen to us, when we shall be come to the Heavenly Jerusalem, to behold our Lord Jesus Christ himself, of whom Solomon was but a Type and a Figure, for he had but a spark of his Glory, and but a beam of his Wisdom; when we shall see this peaceable King Crowned with an Heavenly Rainbow,*

Rainbow, we shall be ravish'd into admiration, and as it were, transported out of our selves; then we shall speak in this manner to his Divine Majesty, O Glorious Monarch, all that I have ever heard or imagined of thy Wisdom, of thy Glory, Riches, Beauty, and extraordinary Pleasure of thy Paradise, is more than true, but it is not the thousand part of that which I see this day. O blessed are they that dwell in thy House, and that praise thee without ceasing; happy are they that behold thy Glorious Face, and hear thy Divine Wisdom. After that the Queen of *Sheba* had been some time in the Court of King *Solomon*, she returned back to her own home; but when we shall be once entred into the Glory and Happiness of Paradise, we shall never depart out again; we shall behold continually this Glorious King of Kings, and we shall hear, with Divine transports of Joy, the wonderful expressions of his Wisdom; we shall not only be with him for ever and ever, but we shall always be in him, and he in us.

To take off your mind from all carnal and worldly Thoughts, the Glory and Happiness of Paradise is represented unto us by the Light, as in the 12 Chapter of the *Revelations*, of the Prophet *Daniel*, *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And in the 13 of *St. Matth.* our Saviour saith expressly, *That the Righteous shall shine as the Sun, in the Kingdom of his Father.*

Finally, it is promised, as the highest Glory and Happiness, that we shall stand before the Throne of God, that we shall sit with Jesus Christ upon his Throne, and that we shall see his Face. *St. John* in the 22 of the *Revel.* speaks in this manner; in the description of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, he saith, that the Throne of God and of the Lamb, are in it, that his servants shall serve him, and see his Face, and that his Name shall be up-
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on their Forehead. When we look to behold the Sun, our Faces become not more radiant nor Glorious; nay, many times our Eyes thereby dazle, and our Skin becomes blacker and more swarthy; but when we shall look upon God in his Love and Glory, we shall be perfectly enlightened, and become brighter and more shining; This appears by *Moses's* person, when he came down from the Holy Mountain, his Face was full of Beams of Light, so that the Children of *Israel* could not endure to look stedfast upon him. If therefore this faithful Servant of God had such a bright countenance, by his continuance with God upon an Earthly Mountain, during the space of forty days and forty nights, and by a sight of some light expressions of his Glory; what will be, think ye, your Light, and the brightness of your Countenance, when you shall be raised above the Heavens, to continue with God, and to behold his Face thousands and thousands of Ages; and at the end of all that time, it shall be but the beginning of that most blessed contemplation which shall never end?

When we cast our Eyes upon a beautiful Person, we become neither more beautiful nor happier; nothing but an unprofitable *Idea* remains in our fancy, and many times that also quickly vanisheth away; but when we shall look upon God, we shall become like him, and in this likeness we shall find fullness of Joy, of Happiness and Glory; This is promised to us by the Royal Prophet, in the 16 Psalm, *In thy presence, O God, is fulness of joy; and at thy right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.* And in the 17 Psalm, *As for me, I will behold thy face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.* And the beloved Disciple, of the beloved of the Father, whose Writings are full of love, confirms this Truth, *Beloved, saith he, Now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but*

we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

You see therefore, *Christians*, unto what extraordinary Glory and Happiness you have right to pretend, for in Heaven, God shall not only make us shine as the Sun and the Stars; he shall not only cloath us with the brightness of the glorified Saints and Angels, but he promiseth a great deal more, to make us like unto himself; He shall not only satisfy us with the fatness of his House, and cause us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures; he shall not only fill us with his Treasures, enlighten us with his brightness, cloath us with his Honours, and crown us with his Glory; but he himself will become our Meat and our Drink, our Treasure, our Sun, and Glory; and if I may so say, to satisfy us, and accomplish our Happiness. God shall as it were, dissolve himself into Rivers and Seas of Divine and unspeakable Pleasures; but that I may not be misunderstood in such bold and figurative Language, it shall suffice me to say with *St. Paul*. *That God will be in us all in all*; that is to say, that he will dwell and make his abode in us, in respect of his Being; and that he will cause us to feel in us his Glorious presence as much as a finite and limited Nature, as ours, is capable of. What the Jews have invented of the Manna which their Fathers did feed upon in the Wilderness, may justly be appropriated to Almighty God, as he intends to reveal himself unto us in Heaven; for there is no taste but shall be satisfied, no desire but shall be filled. Moreover, God shall be our Meat and our Drink, our Light, also our Cloathing; and all that we can imagine in him, and his Divine Enjoyments, we shall find beyond all that we can think or desire. The knowledge of Spiritual and Celestial things, which we attain to here below, is like the breaking of the day; and that we shall enjoy hereafter, shall be like that of the Sun, when it shines in our Meridian. But to speak in the Apostles

stles Language, *Now we know in part, and we prophecy in part, but when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part, shall be done away, for now we see through a Glass darkly, but then we shall see him face to face*; whilst we continue in this life, God discovers to us only the borders of his Wisdom, we cannot understand much of it; but in the life to come, he shall reveal to us the depths of his Glorious Mysteries, into which the Angels themselves desire to pry. In our understandings, God shall be as a Sun to enlighten them for ever and ever, and scatter away all mists of Errors and Mistakes. At present, our Will hath its imperfections, and oft-times it rebels against God, but then it shall be perfectly sanctified and reformed according to the Image of God. It shall burn with an Holy Zeal, and with a Love for him. It shall desire nothing but his Glory, and a conformity to his Holy Will. It shall not only obey God without resistance, but it shall fly with an Holy earnestness and speed, to the performance of his Sacred Commands. Whilst we remain in the Fetters of this crazy and sinful flesh, there is always some filth and disorder in our affections; but when we shall come to this Estate of Glory, God will sanctify them in such a manner, by his Presence, that they shall be purer and cleaner than the Stars, or the Sun-beams; they shall become Celestial Fires and Divine Flames, proceeding from Gods love to us. In a word, that Being of Beings, who is Perfection it self, that Author and Origin of all Beauty, that Object so exceeding Glorious and Lovely, shall ravish us in such a manner, that our understandings shall be continually employed in beholding him; our Wills and Affections in loving and embracing him; and all the faculties of our Souls shall labour to be united to him, and to be like him. It shall be in this manner, that we shall be made partakers of the Divine Nature; for we must not fancy that we shall be made partakers of

God's infinite Being, for this Divine Essence is invisible, and uncommunicable to the Creatures, so that none but God can enjoy it; but God's Holiness shall imprint in our Souls its Blessed and Glorious Image, and that of all his wonderful Vertues; when God shall shew himself to us as he is, he will cause us to become like him, by producing in us an impression of his Divine countenance.

It may be you will inquire of me, whether we shall see God, and how we shall behold him? This question is too considerable to be passed over lightly. I am persuaded, *Christians*, that you will not be displeased, not only to hear my judgement, but that of the Holy Scriptures, from whence we draw all our instructions, as out of a Fountain. Some imagine that God cannot be seen, neither in this life, nor in the life to come. Their reasons are very strong and weighty; for first, God is of an invisible Nature: This Quality is ascribed to him by the Sacred writers, as in the 11th of the *Hebrews*, The Apostle saith, that *Moses*, by Faith, saw him who is invisible. And in the 1st Epistle to *Timothy*, in the 1st Chapter he saith, *To the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever, Amen.* Secondly, we read in the 33 of *Exodus*, when *Moses* said to God, *I pray thee let me see thy Glory*; God answered him, thou canst not see my Face, for no man shall ever see my Face and live. Thirdly, *St. John* in the 1st Chapter of his Gospel speaketh thus, *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Lastly, *St. Paul* seems to remove all doubt, for he saith, not only, *That God alone hath immortality, that he dwells in a Light unto which no man can approach, and that no man hath ever seen him*; but he saith more, *that no man can see him*, 1 Tim. 6.

Others are of a contrary opinion, That God may be seen in this life, but that in the life to come, he shall be

be seen more perfectly; that which encourageth this opinion is, that God hath put into the Hearts of all his Children, an earnest desire of seeing his Face, and that in this contemplation they place their greatest Happiness and Glory. This was *David's* desire, A man after God's own heart, in the fourth *Psalms*, *There be many that say, who will shew us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* And in the 42 *Psalms*, *My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?* This is the desire also of the Prophet *Asaph* in the 80 *Psalms*, *O God of Hosts, cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.* Secondly, we have heard *David* say, *I shall see thy face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness, Psal. 17.* And *St. Paul* promiseteth that we shall see God face to face. And *St. John* assures us, *That we shall see God as he is.* Thirdly, in the 3 Chapter of *Numbers*, God speaks in this manner to *Aaron* and *Miriam*, who had murmured against their Brother *Moses*, *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream, my servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine House, with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.* Lastly, we have heard the voice from Heaven, that represents to me the blessed Estate of the Glorified, saying, *That they shall see the face of God.*

If it were lawful for me to engage my self in such an high Meditation, which is above the capacity of Men and Angels, I should declare to you in few words, how it may be said that we shall see God, and in what manner it is impossible to behold him. But first we must take notice of two or three distinctions, which if we understand well, we shall find no more difficulty in this question.

First, God may be considered in three several respects, as he is in Himself, and in his proper Being. It is in this respect, that our Souls do earnestly long for him, and desire to draw near to him, and be united unto him, as to their Sovereign Good, and the bottomless fountain of Glory and Happiness. Secondly, as he doth reveal and discover himself on Earth, by certain Images and Tokens of his favourable presence. Thirdly, as he shall manifest himself in Heaven by the Glorious Images and Divine marks of his Glorious Presence.

Secondly, we must distinguish the several kinds of sight, for there is the sight of the Body, which looks only upon the objects, whereof the Images and Species are within the reach and capacity of our Eye-sight, as are Colour and Light. There is the sight of the understanding, which sees and beholds the things that are at a distance from our senses, as the Spiritual and invisible substances, and the Essential forms of the Body. There is also the sight of Faith, which raiseth yet something higher than our understanding; as it is during our abode here below, when it is enlightened with God's Divine Grace, it sees and beholds things which the eye of the Body never saw, and the sensual understandings of Men can never comprehend, as the Mysteries of Christian Religion, and the powers of the World to come.

Lastly, we must distinguish the knowledge of the Understanding, for sometimes it is obscure and confused; at other times it is plain and distinct: Moreover, that knowledge which is most certain and the plainest, is of two sorts, the one hath bounds and limits suitable to its subject, that is to say, suitable to the ability and reach of the Understanding; the other is absolute, and of the same nature as its object, that is to say, as the thing it self which the understanding looks upon and beholds.

God, as he is in himself, and in his own Essence and Being, hath never been seen by the Eye of the Body, and shall never be, neither in this life, nor in the life to come; for God is a Spirit, and of an invisible Nature, 1 Timothy 6. In this respect St. Paul affirms, *That God dwells in a Light which no man can approach unto, that no man hath ever seen him, nor can see him,* John 3. But this good God, who of himself is invisible, delights to shew himself to his Creatures in several ways.

First, God shews himself unto all Men, in the works of the Creation of the great World, for as St. Paul saith in the 1 of the Romans, *The invisible things of God from the creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead;* Especially, he hath been pleased to give in the *Light*, a production of Nature, and the first of all visible Creatures, a lively Image of himself; for as there is nothing more ample, purer, and more beautiful than the Light; Likewise, there is no visible Creature that represents so well, this great God, who is a Being most pure, most beautiful and perfect, the Father of Lights, and the true Sun of our Souls.

Secondly, God discovers himself in all the workings of his wonderful Providence, and chiefly in his extraordinary and miraculous Operations; for when men perceive productions which exceed all the ordinary strength of Nature, they are forced to acknowledge, that they come immediately from an infinite Power. As *Pharoah's* Magicians, for when they saw, that by their Magick Art, they were not able to counterfeit *Moses's* Miracle, they confessed, *That it was the finger of God.*

Thirdly, God discovers himself in his Holy and Divine Word, which is to us as a beautiful and perfect Looking-Glass, where we may see his Image, and the brightness of his Glory; This was St. Paul's judgement, when

he saith, *That all we that behold as in a Glass, the glory of the Lord, with open face, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 2 Cor. 3. 18.

Fourthly, God revealed himself to the Church of *Israel*, in the Ark, the Sign and ordinary Token of his Gracious Presence. He did speak unto this People from the midst of the two Golden Cherubims, and did publish his Divine Oracles; there he was pleased to discover himself in divers representations, chiefly in the Cloud and Fire which came down from Heaven. Therefore the Sign, bearing the name of the thing signified, is sometimes stiled *The Lord*; as in that passage, where *David* saith, *My Soul is athirst for God, for the mighty and living God; O when shall I go and appear in the presence of God?* Psal. 42.

Fifthly, God manifested himself to the Patriarchs and Prophets in Dreams and Visions, by Divine Raptures, and Prophetical Elevations. In this manner he appeared to the Patriarch *Jacob* in *Bethel*; for when it is said that God was at the end of the mystical Ladder, which reach'd up to Heaven, without doubt, he gave some Sign and Testimony there of his Presence. And when the Prophet *Isaiab* mentions his Glorious Throne, he makes no difficulty to say, *I saw the Lord sitting upon a Throne, high, and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple; above it stood the Seraphims, each one had six wings, with two he covered his Face, and with two he covered his Feet, and with two he did fly; and one cried to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory, and the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the House was filled with smoak,* Isai. 6. And the Prophet *Micah*, when he speaks of his Vision, he saith, *I have seen the Lord sitting upon his Throne, and all the Hosts of Heaven standing at his right hand and at his left,* 1 King 12. And the Prophet *Daniel* describing one of his visions, speaks in this manner,

ner, I beheld, till the Thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit, whose Garment was white as Snow, and the hair of his Head like the pure Wooll, his Throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire, a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him, thousand thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.

sixthly, God shewed himself unto Moses in a particular manner, not only when he appeared unto him in Horeb, and spoke to him out of the flaming Bush, but especially when God appeared unto him in the Holy Mountain, and for the space of forty days and forty nights, discoursed with him familiarly, as with a friend; for at that time, he exposed before him such Glorious and Magnificent Tokens of his Divine Presence, that it was almost the same thing, as if he had seen God himself. God gave him more Light and Knowledge of his Glory, than to any other of his Prophets, and revealed himself unto him in a more familiar manner, than to any other living Man; Because of these glorious and extraordinary appearances of God's presence, and of the brightness of his Light, which shined so clear in the Soul of Moses, because of that Holy familiarity which he had with God, that he speaks of it in such a manner, in the 12. Chapter of the Book of Numbers; for we cannot understand that place in a literal sense; That Moses did really see God himself, and that with the Eyes of the Body, he beheld his Being, which is altogether invisible: But we must understand it in this manner, that never any man beheld such glorious expressions of the Godhead with the Eyes of the Body, That never any man discoursed so familiarly with God as Moses; never any many hath ever had so clear and plain a knowledge of his great Glory and Divine Majesty.

Seventhly, God hath often appeared unto Men in Humane shapes, and hath given them such visible expressions

pressions of his Holy Presence, that such as have seen those Images, tell us that they have seen God. It is in this manner that *Jacob* speaks, when he had wrestled with God in his Body; when he was moved, not only by an assisting Angel, but also by God himself, who discovers there his Divine Vertue, *I have seen, saith he, God face to face, and my soul hath been saved*, Gen. 23. *Manoah*, the Father of *Sampson*, tells as much, when he had seen the Humane shape in which God was pleased to appear, when he ascended up into Heaven in the flame of his sacrifice, *For certain we shall dye, for we have seen God*, Judg. 13. In like manner, when God appeared to *Abraham* in the shape of a man, this man is called the Lord, and *Abraham* bowed himself before him, and worshiped; and at one time this Holy Patriarch saw no less than three Humane shapes which appeared to him at once. Some think that God appeared but in one of these shapes, and the two others were Angels. That which confirms this opinion is, that of these three persons, there is but one that speak as God, and receives *Abraham's* Adoration; And when he appears no more, the two others are stiled Angels, in the beginning of the 19 Chapter. But others believe with some antient Doctors of the Church, that these three Humane shapes were a true Image, and living Representation of the most Holy, and most Glorious, and most Wonderful Trinity. In this opinion there is nothing contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Finally, God hath discovered himself by his Son in a particular manner, he is named therefore, *The Image of God, the Image of the invisible God, and God manifested in flesh*. God hath not only imprinted in him, some tokens of his Godhead, and Marks of his Divine Power; he caused him not to walk and move as the borrowed Bodies of the *Old Testament*; He hath not only ingraven in him, the perfect Image of all his Divine Vertues; God is not in him in a shadow or

a Figure, as he was in the Ark, and in *Solomons* Temple; but he hath dwelt in him bodily, and by his Eternal Godhead, as *St. Paul* informs us, *That in him dwelleth Bodily*, that is to say, Really, and Essentially, all the fulness of the Godhead; therefore our Saviour tells *St. Philip*, *That he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father*, *John 14*.

This being thus, let us now consider how we see God now here below, and how we shall see him hereafter in Heaven: At present we see him with the eyes of the Body in his visible Works; And we see his Being also with the Eye of our Understanding, but in a weak and in a languishing manner; we know him with a very obscure and imperfect Knowledge; for this cause *St. Paul* saith very well and truly, *That we know in part, and we prophecy in part*. We see God also with the Eye of Faith, it is with this Eye that we see him, as *Moses* did, who is invisible, and that we behold our Lord Jesus Christ, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, above all Principalities and Powers, worshiped and adored by all the glorified Church in Heaven. In Paradise we hope to see with the Eyes of our glorified Body, the Images and Marks of the Divinity, so Glorious, and Magnificent, so Beautiful and full of Majesty, that in comparison of that, whatsoever appeared to the Prophets and Patriarchs in their illustrious Visions, was nothing but obscurity and darkness. And with the same Eyes of the Body we shall see God in the Person of our glorified Saviour, who is the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person; so that we may well say with *Job*, in a full assurance of Faith, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, I shall see God in my Flesh, whom I shall see for my self, and my Eyes shall behold, and not another*, *Job 19*. But for the Essence and Being of God, and for the
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Eternal Godhead, we shall not, nor cannot see it with the Eyes of the Body, let them become never so Glorious, Incorruptible and Immortal. We shall neither see it with the eye of Faith, for then Faith shall be totally abolished, and we shall not walk any more by Faith, but by sight; but we shall see God with the Eye of the Understanding, enlightned with a Divine Glory. Now, as we have taken notice, there are two sorts of Contemplations and Knowledges, the one perfect, proportioned to the object, which we behold and look upon; the other imperfect, suitable to the being, beholding, and to the abilities of the understanding. Our future knowledge of God, shall not be of the first, but of the latter sort; that is to say, That we shall never see into the bottom of the Mysteries of God's Divine Majesty, and of his Glory. We shall never know perfectly, this highest Perfection, this infinite Being, this Incomprehensible and Glorious Godhead; for things are in their Actions, as they are in their Beings, in their Abilities. Now in the most glorious State of Heaven, our Beings and Abilities shall be limited and circumscribed; therefore it shall be absolutely impossible for us to comprehend perfectly the Being of God, who is infinite in it self, and in all its wonderful perfections. The Holy Angels themselves, the Cherubims and Seraphims, these Beings of Light and Glory, are not able to pry into these bottomless depths, they are not able to approach this infinite Light. In a word, it is necessary to God himself, to comprehend and understand perfectly, the infinite Glory, and the highest perfections of the Godhead.

Although our sight shall not be able to search into the bottom of these depths of the Divinity, although we shall never be able to comprehend perfectly the infinite Being of God; nevertheless we hope to behold openly this wonderful object, and to obtain

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as much knowledge of it as shall be requisite to render us perfectly happy ; for as when our Eye beholds the Noon-Sun , it cannot stedfastly look upon it, nor receive all its beams, but it partakes of as much as is necessary to enlighten it ; and when there should be a thousand Suns, our Eyes would never make use of more Light than they do at present. Likewise, in beholding the Father of Lights , this beautiful Sun of our Souls , it is altogether impossible to receive the immensity of its Beams ; but we shall partake of as much as shall be necessary to drive away all our darkness, and to fill us full of a perfect Light , to make us become Light in the Lord, and to cause us to shine for ever as so many Stars and little Suns. As an empty Vessel, when it is cast into the Sea, comprehends not all its waters, but receives only enough to fill it up, so that there is no part empty. Likewise, when we shall be cast into the Ocean of the Godhead, we shall not be able to comprehend and receive God's infinite Glory and Happiness, but we shall receive and comprehend as much as shall content all our desires, and satisfy all our craving Appetites ; so that there shall be nothing at all wanting in us, which might be expected in the highest felicity of an humane Creature.

I do not say, in the highest Felicity, absolutely without limitation, for there are two kinds of Felicities , the one absolutely perfect, beyond which there can be nothing expected ; This Felicity or Happiness is only to be found in God. The other is perfect, in a certain degree. As the perfect happiness of the Angels is to attain to that degree of Glory, of which the Angelical Nature is capable ; Likewise , the perfect happiness of Man, is to enjoy all that Blessedness, whereof the Humane Nature alone and single is able to enjoy ; I must say the single Nature of Man, to distinguish it from that which is united to the Person of
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the Eternal Son of God; for by this means, this hath attained to an uncommunicable Glory, of which other Creatures cannot partake in the same perfection; it hath attained to an happiness, far above the Glory of all the Children of God, and of all the Holy Angels of Heaven, far above what they can or may expect.

Moreover, I may say that there is a supreme and perfect Happiness independant, which subsists of its self, without any foreign assistance; this kind of happiness is only to be found in God. For as he is of himself an infinite Being, which borrows nothing from others, Likewise of himself he is absolutely and perfectly happy. The other happiness is that which proceeds not of our selves, but is derived to us from another; such is the Glory and Happiness of the Angels. This Lesson the Holy Ghost teacheth us in these words, *God puts Light into his Angels*; that is to say, that these Holy Spirits have nothing of Light or Glory, but it is derived to them from the Father of Lights, and his gracious Aspect: such also is the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator; therefore he speaks thus to God his Father, *Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may Glorify thee*, John 17. In a word, such shall be our Glory and Happiness, for as we have our Being from God, it is from him that we derive our Well-being also; and it is from him that we expect all our Glory and Bliss.

From hence you may easily conclude, that God is the only object, and the only source of our Eternal Glory and future Happiness. If you enquire from me what shall be the Essential form? I answer, that it shall be our Likeness and Resemblance with God, which shall be as perfect as an Humane Creature is capable of. Now this Resemblance and Similitude shall consist in three things, in a pure and bright Light which shall not be mixed with the least Darkeness, in a perfect

fect and a compleat Holiness, where there shall not be the least blemish; and in an infinite and unalterable joy and content, where there shall never be the least cloud of Grief; but of this we have sufficiently Treated already.

Some there are that inquire whether in Paradise there shall be an equality, or an inequality of Glories and Happineses? To say the truth, this question is more curious than necessary; for we need not inquire whether there shall be any more or less happy than our selves. It should suffice us for our comfort, to know, that if we be true Believers, and truly penitent; if we fear God as we ought to do, if we serve him with a Religious mind until the last gasp, that in such a case we shall attain to the Glory of the Children of God, and possess with them a perfect and Eternal Happiness. Nevertheless, that we may seem to omit nothing which might give satisfaction to every believing Soul; I shall examine this particular, but it shall be without advancing any new thing, which I have not seen in the Holy Gospel, nor learn'd from the true Doctor of our Souls; I shall declare the opinion of the most Learned, upon this rich and excellent subject; afterwards, I shall add mine own, which I shall submit, as the rest of this Treatise, to the judgement of the Wiser and more Learned Persons, who are better acquainted than I am, with the Spiritual and Heavenly Enjoyments.

Some believe, that in Paradise there shall be every where the same Glory and Happiness, equal and uniform in every individual Person. This opinion they back with these reasons; First, That we shall have no Glory nor Happiness, but that which hath been purchased for us by the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that as this Glorious Saviour hath purchased this Glory and Happiness for all the Elect equally, they shall all enjoy it in the highest degree and perfection

perfection. Secondly, that the Holiness of all the Blessed shall be perfect; therefore as they shall be all perfectly Holy, they shall be all likewise perfectly happy in the same degree. Thirdly, that our Saviour saith expressly, without any exception, *That the Saints shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matth. 23. Now the Sun is the King of the Stars, and the brightest of all the Heavenly Bodies. Fourthly, That the Elect are represented in Heaven, as so many Kings, having upon their Heads, Crowns of Gold, *Revel. 1. 4, 5*. Now there is no inequality between Kings, for each of them is in possession of Sovereignty and an independent and Supreme Authority. Fifthly, That Jesus Christ represents to us the last transactions and passages of the World, by the parable of a Father of a Family, who at the end of the day, bestows the same Salary upon every one that hath laboured in his Vine-yard, *Matth. 20*. Sixthly, That it is said in general terms, *That we shall see God face to face, and that we shall see him as he is*, 1 Cor. 13. 1 John 3. and that in this blessed Vision shall consist the chief Happiness of Man. Lastly, That after the Resurrection, *God shall be in us all in all*; which expression declares the highest and most compleat Happiness and Glory.

Others think the contrary, that in Heaven there shall be an inequality of Glory, and several degrees of Happiness. This their opinion they strengthen chiefly with two passages of Holy Scripture, the one is in the 14 of St. *John*, where Christ saith to his Apostles, *In my Fathers house there are many Mansions*. The other is in the 1 Cor. 15. where St. *Paul* discoursing at large, of the happiness of the Saints after the Resurrection, saith, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another in Glory, so is the resurrection of the dead*.

There are some that are content to believe an inequality of Glory and Happiness, but they undertake
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further to discourse of this matter, with as much boldness, as if God had admitted them to the knowledge of his Eternal Secrets; as if he had discovered to them all the wonders of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, more plainly than to his beloved Disciple. Such tells us, not only that there shall be divers degrees of Glory and Happiness, but they inform, who they are that shall obtain such and such Degrees; they prescribe in a Dogmatical and Magisterial manner, which shall be the Glory of Virgins, which shall belong to Confessors, which shall be that of Martyrs. In a word, some are so much puffed up with an high conceit of themselves, and of their own deservings, that they make an open profession of being of the number of such as shall obtain the highest degrees of Glory and Happiness.

But my opinion is, that the Truth is to be found between these two extreams; I shall not impose any Law upon the consciences of any Men, in this particular, whereof the decision is not absolutely necessary to Salvation; yet we may say, that in Heaven there shall be divers degrees of Glory and Happiness, but we dare not describe them, nor venture to apply them to any persons, or to tell who of us shall possess such and such degrees. This were a bold attempt upon Heaven, and a taking of the forbidden Fruit; by such an impudency we should lose our selves, instead of saving others; for such as are so audacious, as to search into the Divine Majesty, shall be swallowed up by his Glory. *Prov. 25.*

And although we verily believe degrees of Glory, yet we may say, without offence to any person, that this belief is not to be established upon the fore-mentioned passages, from whence we cannot gather any such conclusion; for in the 14 of *St. John*, our Saviour saith not that there are divers Degrees, or divers Mansions, whereof some are Richer and more Glorious than others, but only, that in his Fathers House there are many Mansions. The meaning of this Divine Saviour is as

clear as the day, he had an intentment to raise up the drooping courage of his Holy Apostles, and to comfort them in his absence; for that purpose he assures them, that he is going to lodge in an House, where there is not only room for himself, but also for them, and for all that shall believe in him by their Teaching. He expounds his words plainly in the 17 Chapter of the same Gospel, where he speaks to God in this manner, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* For the other passage of the 1 of the *Corinth*. I beseech you, devout Souls, read over the Apostles words, and consider with a Religious observation, what goeth before, and what follows after; you shall find that the Apostle intends not to compare the Saints, the one with the other, but only to discover the difference which is between our Bodies as they are in this corruptible and mortal life, and as they shall be when they shall have put on incorruption and immortality. Therefore, when he had said, *One is the Glory of the Sun, another is the Glory of the Moon, another the Glory of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory;* He doth not add likewise, so shall be the Glory of one blessed Person differing from another, but he saith, *So shall be the resurrection from the dead; The Body is sown in corruption, it shall be raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.*

From whence is it therefore that we gather these divers degrees of Glory and Happiness? I answer, First, from the divers and different pains and punishments of the damned. For as in Hell there shall be several degrees of Torments; Likewise, it is very probable, that in Heaven, there shall be divers degrees of Happiness, and several degrees of Glory. Secondly, God to declare his Divine Wisdom, which is various in all things,

things, bestows at present all his Blessings and Riches with a wonderful variety, and with an admirable order. Thus you may see in nature, that God hath scattered up and down the World, divers gifts and excellencies; for example, the smell and beauty of Roses, is different from that of the Lillies; the brightness of the Diamonds, is not like that of Rubies; the light of the Sun differs from that of the Moon and Stars. Likewise, it is very probable, that above all the Heavens, there shall be divers degrees of Light and Glory. Amongst the Holy Angels, there are Titles of Honour and several Dignities, therefore they are named *Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers*: As therefore amongst the Angels there are divers degrees of Glory; it is also likely that the same order shall be observed amongst the Glorified in Heaven. Besides, as in the Church militant, the Graces of God differ very much. The Souls of the Faithful are not the same in all respects, they have differing qualities and excellencies; there are in them divers degrees of Light, of Knowledge, of Faith, of Hope, of Charity and Holiness. Likewise, according to the Analogy of Faith, there should be also in the Church glorified, divers degrees of Glory and Happiness; and the rather, because, Glory is nothing else, but the compleating and perfection of Grace. This reason is so much the stronger, because in the parable of the Talents, Jesus Christ gives to his servants a Glory, proportionable to the former Riches of his Grace. None can conceive, that the words relate to God's Favours bestowed upon his Children on Earth, for our Lord speaks of that which he intends to do them, when he shall come down from Heaven to judge the World. The words relate to the time, when he shall say to such as have well employed the Talents of his Mercy, *Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord*: They relate also to the time when he shall cause the unprofitable servant to be cast

into utter darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth. It may also be worthy of our observation, that the felicities of Heaven are represented to us by a Feast, where all partake of the same Meats, but some are seated in a more Honourable Room than others. This, as I conceive, may be gathered from our Saviours words, *Many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.* It may also be gathered from that other passage, where *Lazarus* is carried by the Holy Angels into *Abraham's* bosom. Lastly, I ground my opinion upon the 12 Chapter of *Daniel*, where this blessed Prophet, when he had spoken in general terms of the future Happiness of the faithful, who shall rise to Eternal life, he comes down to particularize some, unto whom God hath bestowed more light upon Earth, and whose Ministry he hath made use of, to bring many Souls to Salvation; amongst these, he seems to put many degrees of Glory, *They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that bring many to righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* From this passage one may apparently conclude, that as the light of the Firmament differs much from that of the bright Stars; and as amongst the Stars there is a diversity and variety of Light: in the same manner there shall be divers and differing degrees of Glory amongst the glorified in Heaven.

Now in answer to that reason, that Jesus Christ hath purchased for us the Glory and Happiness of Heaven; and that therefore this Glory and Happiness should be equal, I confess this reason is weighty, I intend not to refute it altogether, but I shall propose several things to the consideration of the Pious and Devout Souls that shall pursue this Treatise. First, that although the blood of Jesus Christ hath purchased for us in Heaven; and that we are not able to deserve it by our most regenerate Actions, nor by our most grievous sufferings
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and Martyrdom; because that when we have performed all that is commanded, our Saviour requires us to say, *We be unprofitable servants, because we have done but what we are bound to do*, Luke 17. And because his Holy Apostle assures us, that *When all things are reckon'd up, the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. Nevertheless, God is so Good, Merciful, and Bountiful, that he bears with our imperfections, that he rewards as a Father, with a free Reward, all the good Works of his Servants, especially the works of Charity. Therefore Jesus Christ tells his Apostles, and generally all the faithful, *Whosoever shall give unto you to drink a cup of Water, because you are Christs, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward*, And because 'tis the custome of the Eastern People, to warm their drink, therefore to give a cup of cold water may be reckoned the smallest assistance. Our Saviour saith, *Whosoever shall give unto one of the little ones, to drink a cup of cold water only in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward*. Matth. 10. If such as bestow a cup of cold water for God's sake, are rewarded in Heaven, what may not those bountiful Souls expect there, who now spend their Estates in charitable Deeds? *He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully*, 1 Cor. 9. These be the words of St. Paul, which in my judgement declare plainly an inequality amongst the Glories and Happinesses which we are to reap in Heaven. Besides, we have heard a Prophet tell us, that all such as by the light of their Doctrines, and the Holiness of their Lives, lead many Souls to their Salvation, shall shine for ever in Heaven, as so many bright Stars. It stands with reason, for if our Saviour will in his infinite Mercy, reward such a small kindness as the gift of a draught of Water, to one of his Children, they shall excell in Glory, who power forth for

his sake in his quarrel, every drop of their Blood, and by their deaths confirm his Holy Gospel, *This is a faithful saying, If we dye with Jesus Christ, we shall also live with him, if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* But that which seems to me yet stronger, which makes for this purpose, is, That all the spiritual Graces which are bestowed upon us in this life, proceed from the Holy Ghost, purchased for us by the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his precious Blood. Now these Graces are differing and various; if therefore there are divers degrees in *Grace*, why should not there be also divers degrees in *Glory*, seeing that both have been purchased for us with the same price, by the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The other Argument drawn from the happiness and perfection of the Glorified is rational, but not invincible; for several Diamonds may be perfect in their kind, so that the clearest Eye cannot take notice of any imperfection; nevertheless, they may differ in weight and price. All the Stars have their perfection and light; Nevertheless, one Star differs from another Star in *Glory*; All the Angels of Heaven are perfectly Happy and Holy, and yet there is a great inequality amongst them in *Glory* and *Dignity*. Likewise, although all the Blessed shall attain to a perfect Holiness, in my judgement, that cannot hinder the diversity of degrees of *Glory* and *Happiness*.

I acknowledge, also that the other objection, drawn out of these words, *The Just shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, is not to be despised, but it concludes nothing to the purpose; for if you should cut out excellently well, some Orbs of Chrystal, of differing sizes, some greater, some less, and should put them all in the Sun, they would be all full of Light in every part; every one of them would represent the beautiful Image of that Sun that looks upon them, so that it may very well be said of all of them, that they
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shine as the Sun. Nevertheless, according to their bigness and size, they receive more Light, and the Sun seems greater in the one than in the other. To the other objection, that all the Glorified in Heaven are named Kings. I answer, that this is not to be understood in a literal Sence, no more than when it is said, that they had on their Heads Crowns of Gold. That I may continue in the same comparison, I may say, that as all Kings have a Sovereign Majesty, which acknowledges none above it, but God from whom it proceeds: Nevertheless, some have a greater Power and Riches than others. Likewise, all the glorified Saints shall enjoy a Sovereign and perfect Happiness, and receive it immediately from God. This cannot hinder them from differing from one another in Glory. I answer next, to the other Argument taken out of the Parable of the Father of the Family, who at the Evening of the day rewarded equally all his Labourers that had been employed in his Vineyard, giving to every one of them a penny, that Parables are as Pictures, in which, besides the thing intended to be drawn, there are many particulars which serve but as flourishes to adorn the piece. If we should consider every passage of this Parable, we might gather from hence, that amongst such as shall be saved, there shall be some murmuring against God, who shall envy their companions, which is a gross absurdity to conceive; the design of our Saviour is not to speak of the equality of the glorified Saints, but his intent is to shew, that those whom God calls first, should not despise the others; because God, who doth with his own what he pleaseth, is able to make them equal, and to bestow upon them the same advantages. Lastly, as every one whom the good man of the House sent into his Vineyard at several times of the day, received for their Salary a penny; in the same manner, whomsoever God calls into his Church effectually, at any time, nay, at the hour of death,

they shall receive from his infinite Bounty, eternal Life; but from hence we cannot conclude any thing contrary to this Truth, that in Heaven there shall be divers degrees of Glory.

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The greatest difficulty, in my judgement, is in this Allegation, *That we shall see God face to face, and that he will be all in all*, 1 Cor. 13. 1 Cor. 15. Nevertheless, we may say, that as all the damned in Hell shall lose all sight of God, yet that cannot hinder the divers degrees of Pain and Torment. Likewise, all the glorified in Heaven shall see God; but this sight which all shall enjoy, cannot remove the inequality of their Glory and Happiness. As when all men look upon the same Sun, but several receive the benefit of its beams in a differing manner; thus we shall all behold the same God, but the Gracious Aspect of his Countenance shall be cast upon us variously, and produce in us the divers and various effects. We may also make use of another comparison; As when we cast many empty Vessels into the same Sea, they are all filled up, so that it may be said of them, that the Sea is in them all: some nevertheless, may be more capacious, and receive more Water than others. Likewise, all the Saints shall enter into the same wonderful Ocean of the Godhead, they shall be all filled up to the brim with his Glorious presence, so that God shall be all in all. Nevertheless, they shall receive differing measures of the Waters issuing forth to Eternal life. In a word, as God shall cast headlong all the Reprobates into the same Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and yet there shall be divers degrees amongst them of punishments; so God shall cause all the Elect to drink out of the same River of Pleasure; but there shall be a difference amongst their degrees of Glory. Moreover, this passage may be thus understood, *God shall be all in all*; that is to say, he shall be to us all Riches, Glory, Light, Meat, Drink, Pleasures,

tures, &c. In my judgement we cannot conclude from hence, that he is to make all equal.

If any have other thoughts, or is of another judgement, I shall not offer to condemn him, nor to undertake to refute him; for I conceive, that seeing Almighty God hath hid the Glories and Happiness of Heaven, and covered them over with a thick Cloud, on purpose to limit our too curious inquiry, we cannot mention them with too much modesty and respect; only I must take notice of something more, for the comfort of the good and devout Souls, whose thoughts and mind are in Heaven, That when we affirm, that there shall be differing degrees of Glory in Paradise, we must not conceive that this shall bring any diminution to the perfect Happiness of the Glorified; for if I may once again make use of the comparison of the Sun-beams, and of the Waters of the Sea, I cannot find any more proper for this purpose. As all Eyes that look upon the clear Sun, without Cloud or Mist, receive its Rays in a different manner, yet they have all enough to see to guide themselves, and to rejoice in this beautiful Light that enlightens them; if some receive a greater measure of that Light, this hinders not the rest from enjoying also a sufficiency; so shall it be with all the Glorified Souls, when they shall behold God the Father of Lights, the true Sun that shall shine for ever and ever. If any of them shall have more or less of his Light, that shall in no wise impede the perfection of anothers Happiness, for every one of them shall enjoy as much as they shall be able to receive, or shall be necessary to compleat their Joy, and perfect their Happiness. And as when we cast into the Sea many empty Vessels, some greater, some less, the greater contains more Water, and the lesser not so much; yet they do all receive enough to be filled up to the brim: if the least of these Vessels had
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the knowledge to speak, they would not complain of the greater, for containing more than they, because they have all as much as they can either desire or expect. Likewise, when the Saints shall be cast into that bottomless Sea of Glory and Happiness, they shall be filled all up to the brim, so that they shall not be able to desire any more; they shall be all according to their differing capacities, perfectly and entirely happy. Consider therefore, *Christian Soul*, that if thou enjoyest so much satisfaction and delight as thou art capable of, although others may have something more, thou art no less happy for their overplus; there is none but God alone, that according to the infiniteness of his Being, possesseth an unmeasurable and infinite Glory and Happiness. This bottomless source of Glory and Bliss, shall for ever and ever run over all the glorified in Heaven, and satisfy their Souls with unspeakable Delights.

You may ask, *Christians*, in what part of the great World shall God cause us to enjoy so many rare pleasures and Heavenly contentments? Where shall he produce so many Treasures and Riches? Where will he discover so much Glory and Splendor? In what part doth he intend to shew so many Divine marks of his Gracious Presence? I answer, that this place is above the Elemental World, above all the Heavens that appear before our Eyes, and that roul about us. If we will understand this, we must remember, that the Holy Scripture makes mention of three Heavens; The first is, the large extent of the Air, distinguished by the Learned, into three Regions. In this sense it is to be taken, when it speaks of the Birds of the Air. The second Heaven comprehends the Heavely Spheres, the Globes that are between the Moon and the Firmament, where are all the fixed Stars; and if beyond this, there be any other Sphere, whereof the motion

is so furious and swift, as to carry with it the inferior Globes, and to cause them to roul round in the space of four and twenty hours. Of this Heaven, *David* speaks in the 19 Psalm, *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy-work, he hath put in them a Tabernacle for the Sun.* Now, above all these Heavenly Spheres mentioned by the Astrologers, some reckon up nine or ten, and others more. There is yet a third Heaven spoken of by *St. Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. *I know, saith he, a man in Christ, which was taken up into the third Heaven; I know that he was taken up into Paradise, and heard words which cannot be spoken, which are not possible for man to utter.* The Holy Apostle removes in these words, all doubts concerning the place intended by this *Thrid Heaven*, for he calleth it *Paradise*, where he heard unspeakable words, which are not possible to be uttered.

The Celestial Globes roul about continually, but this Third Heaven, which for its excellency is stiled Heaven, is fixed, and without motion in Eternal Rest. And as much as these beautiful Orbs have a greater Light and Glory than the Air and the inferior Bodies; so much the more doth this Third Heaven excel them. It is my judgment, that *Solomon* means this Third Heaven, scituate above all the rest, which exceeds them so much in Beauty and Glory, when he speaks to God, *of the Heavens, and of the Heaven of Heavens*, 1 Kings 8. That is to say, the most Excellent, the highest, and the most Glorious of all the Heavens, *are not able to contain thee*; and God himself saith, by his Holy Prophet, *The Heavens are my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool*, *Isaiah* 66. For in this high Heaven, God hath placed his Throne, where he discovers his Glory, and the brightness of his surprizing Countenance; there the Seraphims fly, and thousand thousands worship him, and ten thousand

and Millions stand continually before him, *Isaiah 6. Dan. 7.* Here it was that the Blessed Soul of our Saviour Christ was admitted, as soon as it had left the Body, according to what he promised to the crucified Thief. *Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise, Luke 23.* Hither this Glorious Saviour is ascended, both in Soul and Body, after his Resurrection; and here it was that St. Stephen saw him, when he cryed out, *I see the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God, Acts 7.* And hither it is, that the Souls of all such as dye in his favour, are carried up. Therefore St. Paul to the *Hebrews*, mentioned immediately after the thousands of Angels, *The Spirits of just Men made perfect, and the Church and Congregation of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven.* In short, it is the Glorious Seat, where we hope that God will receive us, both in Soul and Body, at that day, when we shall be taken up into the Air, above the Clouds of Heaven, to be for ever with the Lord Jesus.

Some inquire then what shall become of this Elemental World? whether this Heaven that appears to our Eyes, and this Earth which sustains us, shall perish? or whether they shall remain yet after the great day of Doom?

Certain prophane Atheists are perswaded, that the World shall remain for ever, as it doth at present, and that there shall be no manner of alteration. The Apostle St. Peter hath Prophefied of these Persons, and described them in their own Colours, *There shall come at the last day mockers, walking after their own Lusts, saying, where is the promise of his coming, for since the Fathers are asleep, all things continue in the same manner, since the beginning of the World.* I need not trouble my self in a refutation of such impieties; I speak to none but to the devout Souls, which reverence

rence the Dignity of the Holy Scriptures, and are fully perswaded of the Truth of all the Articles of our Creed.

It oft-times happens, when Men oppose a false Doctrine, and an erroneous opinion, they run from one extremity to another; therefore some imagine, that the World shall totally perish: and that as God hath called the Heavens and Earth, and the rest of the Elements out of nothing, he will reduce them all again into the same Nothing, and that he intends to create others, more Beautiful, more Holy, and far more Glorious. There are two kinds of expressions that seem to favour this opinion. The first, which speaks of the Heavens and of the Earth, as of perishing and decaying Creatures. In this manner *David* discourseth of them in the 102 *Psalms*, and after him, the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *Thou Lord, hath established the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands, they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; they shall wax old as doth a Garment, and as a Vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed.* And our Saviour tells us in the 24 of *St. Matt.* *The Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away.* Especially, the words of *St. Peter*, in the 2 Epistle, and the 3 Chapter, are remarkable, *The Heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the Element shall melt with heat, and the Earth with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* The other passages mention new Heavens, and a new Earth, as in the 65 of *Isaiah*, *Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth, and the former things shall be remembered no more.* Likewise in the fore-mentioned Chapter. the 3 of the 2 Epistle of *St. Peter*, *We look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, according to his promise, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.* And in the 21 of *Revel.* *I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth, for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away, and there was no*
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more Sea, Moreover, St. Paul to the *Hebrews* speaks of the *World to come*; from hence some conclude that the old World ought to be abolished, and that God shall create a new World.

There is no man, that is a Christian, can doubt of that wonderful change which shall happen to the World at the last day, if he considers the fore-mentioned passage of Holy Scripture, especially that of St. Peter, *The Heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the Elements shall melt with heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein.* So that as the Walls of Jerico fell at the sound of the Priests Trumpets; Likewise this great world shall be turned upside down at the blowing of the Arch-Angels Trumpet. Our reason alone being enlightened by Divine Revelation, seems to confirm this Truth; for seeing that the House infected with a spreading Leprosy, was to be demolished, how much the rather should the World be destroyed, because in it is to be seen apparently, the spots and blemishes of sin, the Spiritual Leprosy?

But although this great Fabrick of the World ought to be ruined and turned upside down, we do not believe that it shall be reduc'd to nothing; its qualities shall be changed, and it may be its form shall be altered, but its substance and matter shall continue always the same: For First, As God hath created the World for his own Glory, he cannot be disappointed of the intent of his Creation. And because this world hath not glorified him as it ought, he will put it into a condition proper to glorify him, according to that purpose, for which he drew it out of nothing. Secondly, Seeing that this World was created to serve Man, as a Looking-Glass, to behold the Eternal Power of God, and that this beautiful Looking-Glass hath been spotted and sullied by sin, It is yet possible to cleanse it, and make it brighter, that it might represent its
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Creator better, and shew forth a more perfect Image of his Divine Majesty. Thirdly, Seeing that God doth nothing in vain, there is no likelyhood that he should destroy the World totally, and reduce the primitive Matter to nothing, from whence it is drawn, to create new Matter, because he is able of this old Matter, to make a new Earth, and new Heaven, as pure and undefiled, as if the Matter had been newly created. Fourthly, Sin hath spoiled and disfigured the Works of the Creation, but it hath not touched, neither the first Matter nor its Being, so that God can take away this defilement, and remove the deformity, without touching the Matter, which of it self is innocent and harmless. In Man, the little World and the compendium of the great, I find a beautiful and perfect Image of that which God shall do with the whole World. God intends not to destroy the substance of our Souls, but only to purge them from all vicious qualities, and beautify them with Righteousness and true Holiness; so that they shall be as the Angels of Heaven. Likewise, he intends not to destroy the Substance of our Bodies, but he will free them from corruption, from death, and cloath them with Glory and Immortality; so that this vile Body shall be rendred conformable to the glorious Body of the Son of God, and shall shine as the Sun. Likewise, God will not altogether destroy the World, and abolish its substance, but he will rectify all its imperfections, and add to it a greater Glory. If it be lawful for me to discover here all my thoughts; I must say, that I put a great difference between Heaven and Earth, for the Earth is altogether corrupt and spoiled with sin; it is the Earth, especially, that groans under the burden of so many iniquities which reign in it; but if Heaven is guilty of any crime, it is, because it hath given Light to such as have been Rebels against the Divine Majesty, and assisted the cursed Earth by its Gracious and continual influences. Be-
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cause of this great difference, it is my opinion, that the Earth shall be destroyed by Fire, and that all its beautiful Buildings and proud Palaces shall be turned into Ashes; but the change which shall happen in Heaven, shall only be to make it more beautiful and brighter, that Children of God might have there a more Glorious Palace. This seems to have been typified in the ceremonial Law; for as we have already observed, speaking of that which shall happen to the Soul and Body, that when an Earthen Vessel was defiled, it was to be broken to pieces, but such Vessels as were of a more precious Metal, as of Brass, of Silver, or of Gold, were to be purified with Fire. Likewise, the Earth with all its works shall pass through the Flames, so that it shall lose its present shape and qualities. But Heaven, that is as Brass, or rather as fine Silver, shall only be purified by the Fire of the last Judgement. If you remove the cause, you take away also the effect; if you remove away sin, you also remove its punishment. Now it is, because of Man's sin, that the World hath, and shall see so great a change. Therefore, as God, by his infinite Mercy, hath forgiven Man's sin; it is also to be expected from the same Mercy, that he will not totally destroy the World, but that he will rather free it from corruption, unto which our sins had enthrall'd it.

Unless God deals in this manner, our Joy and Comfort cannot be accomplished, and God will not appear perfectly satisfied. While a Subject continues in rebellion, and in the displeasure of his Prince; not only his person is pursued and punished, but all that belongs to him bears the marks of the wrath and indignation of the Prince whom he hath offended; his dwelling House is commonly pulled down, his Woods are cut and mangled, and his Inheritance is destroyed; but when his Peace is concluded, and his pardon granted, his houses are built up again, all signs of the King's displeasure are taken away, and
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every thing appears with a more pleasant countenance ; likewise, because of our Rebellion and our Treason against God, he hath punished the World for our sakes, and hath made it sensible of his wrath. But now that our peace is made, or rather, God having made peace by the blood of his Son, we may justly expect that he will remove all signs of his displeasure and revenge. I remember upon this subject, what *David* saith to God, when he saw the Angels destroying *Jerusalem*, *I have sinned, and I have done wickedly, but these Sheep, what have they done?* 2 Sam. 24. In the same manner every Believer may say unto God, Lo, I have sinned O Lord, I and my Brethren have done wickedly, but these inanimate Creatures, what have they done? our sins hath defiled the Earth, and all things that may be objected against Heaven, it is, to have yielded Light and assistance to us Rebels. Seeing therefore that thou hast blotted out our Sins, and pardoned our Rebellions, spare these harmless Creatures which are punished for our sakes.

At present we can find no difficulty to understand the forementioned passages of holy Scripture, and such as tend to the same purpose. For when *David* and *St. Paul* assure us, *That the Heavens shall perish, that they shall be changed as a garment*, I answer, that they shall perish in respect of their qualities, and not of their substance ; and that the change shall not be, as when one Garment is cast off and another is taken ; but as when the spots and blemishes of an old Garment are taken away and it becomes fresher. When your cloathing is grown old and worn out, if it were in your power to make it become new again, and as fresh as ever it was, you should never dream of seeking for new Stuff. That which is impossible to Men is possible with God, *Luke 6*. And when our Saviour in *St. Mathew's* Gospel, saith, *That the Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away* ; I might say, that these words are to be understood comparatively, that is to say, that the Heavens and the Earth

shall pass away, rather than that the Words of God should fail of an accomplishment; our Saviour confirms this interpretation, when he saith in St. *Lukes* Gospel, It is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass away, than that one tittle of the Law should not be fulfilled. The Holy Scripture is full of such kind of expressions, but I would rather stick to the answers which I have already given to the former passages, and to say, that the Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, not in regard of their substance, but only in regard of their accidental qualities.

In St. *Peters* expressions, I find a double comparison, or allusion, the one relates to the Tents that are pulled down, when the pieces are taken asunder. This comparison is very proper, for this World is like a great Tabernacle, a glorious Pavillion, God shall pull off all the coverings, he shall cut the Cords, and separate every piece: But he shall one day raise it up again, gather every piece, and make it a Royal Tabernacle, full of splendor and glory.

The other comparison is borrowed from Goldsmiths, who cast the Gold and Metals into pots, and then melt them in the fire: Now as they do not destroy, by this means, the Gold and the Silver, but they cleanse it from dross and from dirt, they cause them to appear in all their brightness and beauty, and give them a new shape and form. Likewise the fire of the last Judgement, shall not consume the Heavens and the Earth, but shall only give them a new form and beauty.

The strangest objection, in my opinion, is occasioned by the words of St. *Peter*, *The Earth and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up*; But I answer to this, that there is a great difference between burning, and being totally consumed and abolished. If it were in the power of a Man, whose House is burned to the ground, to raise it up again from its ruins, and to make it more beautiful and glorious than before, by his word alone, he would never seek for other Materials. Now I shall say again, that what is impossible

possible with Men, is possible with God ; he hath already Created the World by his Word, and he is able to restore it again by the same word. Art hath found a way to make beautiful Vessels of melted ashes, and shall not Gods Hand, unto which all the skill of Art, and the strength of Nature cannot be compared, be able to gather up the ashes of this Earth, and to make of it a Body full of glory and light ?

From hence you may perceive, how we are to understand, that there shall be new Heavens and a new Earth ; they shall not be new in regard of their substance and matter, which shall have been from the beginning of the World ; but they shall be new in regard of those noble qualities which God shall give them. When a debauched fellow leaves his wicked life, and applies himself to the practice of Piety and Vertue, we commonly say, that he is not the same, but that he is become another Man. Besides, when a Man hath cast off his old rags, and puts on a glorious Garment, we are wont to say, that he is another Man. We shall have much more cause to say, that the Heavens and the Earth shall be new, when God shall have renewed them. In short, he shall enrich the World with so many wonderful beauties, he shall fill it full of so much glory and excellency, he shall cause it to be so perfect, that we shall have just reason to look upon it, as upon a new World, and to say with the Apostle, *The old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.* I would not have you think, *Christians*, that this opinion is grounded only upon humane reason, it is drawn from the words of *St. Paul*, who speaking of the earthly and insensible Creatures, as may appear by his intention, he saith, not only *that they are subject to Vanity, not willingly, but because of him who hath subjected them*; he means man who by his Sin and Rebellion hath spoiled the World and corrupted Nature ; but he adds immediately after, *That they hope to be delivered from the Bondage of corruption, to be in the glorious liberty of the Children of God* ; afterwards he

faith, for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and before he saith, *That the earnest expectation of the Creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God.* In which passages pray take notice, that St. Paul saith not that these Creatures shall be abolished and totally destroyed, but only, that they shall be delivered from Vanity, and from the bondage of corruption, unto which the Sin of Man hath made them subject; and that this blessed deliverance shall be brought to pass at the day of the Redemption of our Bodies, that is to say, at that day when God shall redeem our Bodies from their Graves, and raise them up to the highest glory and happiness which hath been prepared for us from the Creation of the World.

Then shall happen that which is wont to be seen at the Marriage of a great King, or at a Coronation, or a Triumph, for not only the Prince and his Spouse and all their Court appear in their richest and most glorious Attire, and laden with their most precious Jewels, and the usual Pomp of Triumphs, was as extraordinary and glorious as Invention could make it. In such occasions, the Princes Palace is adorned with the richest, with the most Magnificent and rarest ornaments; and the Town where this Solemnity is kept, shews forth some Signs of the publick rejoicing; many places are beautified with several Rarities, Theaters are erected, the streets are covered with Flowers and Tappistry, fires are kindled, and Torches are lighted, and there is no corner but shews some expressions of the publick joy. Likewise, when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come down from the Clouds of Heaven, upon a Charriot of Triumph, when he shall come to consummate his Marriage with, and to Crown his Spouse, he shall not only appear in his greatest Glory and most Divine Pomp, but the Church also his Spouse, shall be cloathed with a garment brighter than the Sun, and Crowned with an Immortal Glory. All the Blessed Saints shall appear in their attire of Joy, having Palms in their Hands, and Crowns upon their Heads,

Heads, and the Companies of Holy Angels shall sing round about. At that time Paradise, which shall be as his Palace and Bride-Chamber, shall be adorned and enriched with all the light and glory, which I have already essayed to describe unto you. The whole World also, and every part of it, shall partake of this great Glory and Celestial Pomp. The richest Coronations, the most Magnificent Triumphs, the most stately Nuptials are gone in a few hours; therefore the fires of Joy are soon put out, the hangings of the streets are taken down, and the Arches and Pageants disappear, and the City is to be seen in its wonted dress. But as this Glory and Joy of the Church shall never end; Therefore the World shall for ever and ever bear the signs of it. The Ornaments which it shall receive in this joyful day shall never be taken away, and the Celestial fires of gladness shall never go out.

Although it is my opinion that the World shall never be totally Destroyed, but that it shall become more beautiful and glorious than before, I shall not undertake to give you a description of its several parts, nor to tell you how it shall be employed; for example, I shall not determine whether we are to understand our Saviours words in the Gospel, literally, *that the Sun shall become Dark, that the Moon shall not give its Light, and that the Stars shall fall from Heaven*; or whether these Heavenly Bodies shall still continue, whether they shall be decked with a new Light and Glory, and to what purpose they shall serve; for then we shall be enlightened with a greater Light than that of all the Heavenly Bodies. I shall only propose two Things; First, that as in the humane Bodies there are some Members which at present are useful, but then they shall only be for Ornament and Beauty. Likewise, in the great World, there are many needful things which shall then be of no use; nevertheless, they shall be preserved for the Beauty and perfection of the World. Secondly, that as Man the little World shall then be more Beautiful and Perfect than when God first Created him; likewise, this

great World shall receive more Beauty, more Ornaments and Perfection, than when God drew it out of its first Chaos. As much difference as there is between the second *Adam* and the first, between the Heavenly Paradise and the Earthly ; so much there shall be between the first and second World. So that we shall have good cause to say of this great Palace, which is to be destroyed, and reared up again by the Almighty hand of God, as the Holy Prophets said of Solomons Temple, which we have already applied to our glorified Bodies, *The glory of this second House, shall be greater than the glory of the first.*

Some inquire whether we shall know one another in this State of Eternal Glory and Happiness? I mean, whether the Subject shall know his Prince and King ? whether the Sheep shall know their Shepherd, and the Shepherd his Sheep ? whether the Father shall know his Son, the Son the Father, the Husband his Wife, and the Wife her Husband, and so forth ?

Although this question is of the number of such as are more curious, than needful to be known ; nevertheless, a reply seems to bring with it some kind of comfort and satisfaction. I should judge that this Treatise should not be perfect, if I did not say something to this matter ; but what I shall say, shall be with the same moderation and reservedness, as I have expressed in answering to the former questions ; for although what I shall speak, seems to me very plain and without difficulty ; others may have different thoughts, without any prejudice to their Salvation. However, I may establish for an infallible Truth , That the Glory of Heaven, as well as Grace, shall bring Nature to perfection, but shall not destroy it ; it shall add to it other excellencies, but shall not take away those that it hath already ; It shall not abolish any of the Faculties, but it shall beautifie and enrich them with new Ornaments. Therefore by consequence, it shall not take away our Memory, which is one of the rarest gifts and abilities of the reasonable Soul.

I confess that it is said, *That the former things shall be remembered no more, and that they shall come no more into our mind.* But this is to be understood of the evils and calamities of this present life. And we are not to understand the words, so that to speak plainly, we shall totally forget all the former evils and miseries, and that we shall not remember to have undergone them; St. *John* saith the contrary, when he represents the Angel opening the fifth Seal, that he saw under the Golden Altar, which was before the Throne of God, the Souls of them who had been Martyred for the Word of God, and for the Testimony of the Truth, crying out with a loud voice, *How long O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and revenge our Blood upon the Inhabitants of the Earth?* It is true, these words may be understood in a figurative sence, as when God said unto *Cain*, *The voice of thy Brothers Blood cries from the Earth unto me*; and as St. *Paul* saith, *That the Blood of Jesus Christ speaks better things, than the Blood of Abel.* However, from hence we may conclude, that the remembrance of all the Miseries and Evils which we have endured in this Life, is not repugnant to our future estate of glory. This remembrance is so far from prejudicing our felicity, that on the contrary, it shall increase and enlarge it; so that it shall cause it to appear sweeter and more pleasant. When the Prophet saith, *That the former things shall be remembered no more, that they shall never come to mind*; he understands that the former evils shall never be felt, and that we shall be for ever sheltered from all Misery and Misfortunes.

I cannot express this by a nobler and more proper example than that of *Joseph*, when he went out of Prison to take into his hands the Government of *Egypt*, and that he had strengthened himself, by a rich Alliance in Marriage, he named his eldest Son *Manasseth*, which signifies *forgetfulness, or forgetful*; for he said, *God hath made me forget all my labour, and my Fathers House.* Although this holy Man had not forgotten altogether all those things, for he

knew afterwards his Brethren, and told them of the Mischiefs which they had intended against him, and which God had turned to good : But he spake in this manner, because God had chang'd his Misery and Imprisonment into glory and honour. In this sence we are to understand these words, *The former things shall be remembred no more ;* because instead of the Evils and Miseries which we endure here below, we shall enter into an Eternal Glory and Happiness. The Prophet expounds himself sufficiently in the next words, for when he had said, *The former things shall not be remembred, nor come into mind,* he adds immediately after, *be you glad and rejoyce in that which I Create.* The Holy Ghost confirms us in this interpretation in another place, by these words, *All Tears shall be wiped off from our eyes, there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, but eternal joy and Gladness shall be upon our heads.*

Seeing God intends not to destroy those Gifts and abilities which he hath bestowed upon us in this Life, much less shall he abolish our knowledge, which is one of the brightest beams of his Glory. This knowledge shall be so far from diminishing or decaying, that it shall then increase more and more, until it comes to the highest perfection and glory. As the Air loseth nothing of its Twilight at break of day, when the Sun riseth upon our heads, but rather loseth all obscurity and darkness, which the presence of the Sun drives away, until it be perfectly enlightened ; Likewise, our understanding shall lose nothing of that Light and perfection which it receives now from the breaking of the day of Gods Grace ; but as the Son of Righteousness riseth upon it more and more in joy and Salvation, it shall perfectly lose all Darkness and Ignorance by degrees, until it be fully enlightned. From hence it seems we may conclude, that we shall know all the persons in Heaven, whom we have known here below on Earth ; for if the glorified shall remember the wicked who have Tormented them, they must needs remember all Believers who have bestowed upon them their alms, and done them good.

good. If it were otherwise, the Apostle St. Paul would not tell the *Corinthians*, *We are your glory, as also you are ours, at the day of the Lord Jesus*; And he would not write thus to the *Thessalonians*, *What is our hope, our joy, and our Crown of Glory? Is it not you before the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? verily you are our glory and our joy*. Now if in the estate of Glory, St. Paul should not know the *Corinthians* and *Thessalonians*, unto whom he had Preached the Gospel, how shall they be his Joy, his Glory, and his Crown, at the coming of the Lord Jesus? This reason seems to me as clear as the Sun; Nevertheless, I cannot affirm, that in Heaven we shall know again them whom we have known upon Earth, by the features of their countenance, for there shall be a wonderful alteration. The faces of all the Saints shall be so beautiful, so perfect, and so full of light and glory, that the most knowing shall not be able to judge them to be the same whom we have seen upon Earth. Some therefore fancy, that we shall know one another by the assistance of the discourse; but our voice shall then be changed as well as our countenance, and it is doubtful whether we shall discourse of the former things happened on Earth, for our chief employment shall be to behold Gods face, and to sing forth his praises. I had rather therefore affirm, that we shall know one another by an infused knowledge, by which we shall know all things which are possible to be known, and by the light of that glory with which God shall fill our Souls. In short, this knowledge shall proceed from no other principle, than that of all the knowledges which we shall have in that State of Glory and Perfection.

I am therefore more than fully perswaded, that we shall know in Heaven our Parents and our Friends, and generally all the persons whom we have known here below; but we shall also perfectly know them whom we never knew in the World, and never saw with the eyes of the flesh. We shall know the holy and Blessed Virgin *Mary*, the Patriarks, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the

the Confessors, the Martyrs, and generally, without exception, all the Saints who shall be Crowned with Glory and Joy in Heaven. There is no body can question, but that in the Celestial Paradise, we shall have more knowledge and understanding, than ever *Adam* had in the earthly. Now when God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, when he took one of his Ribs, and formed therewith a Woman, he had seen none of this done, nevertheless, when his eyes were open, he knew her, therefore he declared his judgement in this manner, *This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.* And shall not we, when God shall rouse us up from the deep sleep of Death, with the sound of the last Trumpet, know the Spouse of the Son of God, which he hath drawn out of his side, and fashioned with his own precious Blood? *St. Peter*, when he was enlightned by a beam of our Saviours Glory in his transfiguration, knew *Moses* and *Elias* whom he had never seen before; And shall not we know all the Children of God upon Mount *Sion*, when we shall be transfigured our selves, and that we shall all shine as the heavenly light, whereof that of Mount *Tabor* was but an imperfect shadow and representation. But although we shall know in Heaven all the persons whom we have known on Earth, we shall look upon them in another manner, and love them with another affection, for all that we have of the animal and earthly life shall be totally abolished; and as our knowledge shall be clear and certain, our love shall be pure and heavenly. I am not able to express this better than *St. Paul* doth, in these words, *Although I have known Christ according to the flesh, nevertheless, I know him no more according to the flesh.* Christians, consider well these expressions, they will be able to remove all difficulty and doubts out of your minds. We are all fully perswaded, that all the Inhabitants of Heaven, shall know very well our Lord Jesus Christ, for how can it be otherwise, but that we must know this glorious Monarch of Men and of Angels, whose sacred countenance shall shine as the Sun, and who shall
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fit upon his Magnificent Throne, about which Legions of Seraphims flie, and who shall be there adored for ever, by all the Church glorified? Nevertheless St. Paul saith, *That although he hath known Jesus Christ according to the flesh*; That is to say, according to the manner of this low and earthly life, when he lived here on Earth; at present he did not know him in the same manner, he did not consider him otherwise, but as he is at present invested with an unspeakable Glory and Splendor. In the same manner, although we shall know all them whom we have known on Earth, we shall no more know them according to the flesh, that is to say, according to this animal and sensual life; our love shall have nothing of earthly or carnal, but it shall be altogether Spiritual and Heavenly.

I beseech you, Christians, consider well what St. *Matth.* tells us in Chap. 22. The *Saduces*, who say that there is no Resurrection, came to Christ to intangle him with this difficult question, *Master, Moses said, if a Man Dye having no Childien, his Brother shall Marry his Wife, and raise up seed unto his Brother. Now there were with us seven Brethren, and the first when he had Married a Wife Deceased, and having no Issue, left his Wife unto his Brother; likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh, and last of all the Woman Died also; therefore in the Resurrection whose Wife shall she be of the seven, for they all had her?* Our Saviour answers not that this Woman shall belong to none of those Hubands, because they shall not know her, nor distinguish her from other Women, but he replies to them, *you err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the power of God, for in the Resurrection they neither Marry nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven.* From hence we may conclude, that although in Heaven we shall know one another, we shall have nothing of that carnal love which we have at present, and which causeth us to put so much difference between one person and another. A Father may know his Children, but his love shall not be grounded upon considerations of flesh and blood;

he shall love them only, because they are amongst the Children of God, and the Heirs of his Kingdom, and because he shall see them appear in the Image of the Heavenly Father, cloathed with his Light, and Crowned with his Immortal Glory. Finally, we shall love no body but in God, and for his sake, as they shall be in God and God in them. In this manner it shall not be possible to love them more or less. Charity or Love, the Queen of Vertues, shall then sit upon its Throne, and attain to its highest degrees and perfection.

If you think seriously upon this, *Christians*, you shall easily find arguments to answer the vain objections of such as say, that if we come to the knowledge of one another in Heaven, that shall be able to disturb our satisfaction and rest; for as it is a comfort and joy to meet there with our Parents and Friends; in like manner it will be a trouble and dissatisfaction, not to find there all such whom we have formerly loved. We may retort the same objection in a stronger manner against those that believe that we shall not know one another in Heaven, for we may say also, that if we know not the persons, we shall not know whether our Parents or our Friends are there; and that this is as likely to disturb and trouble the quiet and satisfaction of our minds. But to argue in this gross manner, is to confound Heaven with the Earth.

Grief and displeasure can never be admitted in a Paradise of joy and perfect happiness. In this glorious condition, our Knowledge shall be so clear, our Charity so pure, our Love for God so fervant, that as we shall love all things which God shall love, and where his Image shall appear, so it shall not be possible for us to love them whom God shall hate, them who shall bear the marks and similitudes of the Devil.

When *David* was yet here on Earth, he said unto God, *Lord, shall not I hate them that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred, they have been to me as mine Enemies*, Ps. 39. In the same manner we shall rather speak in Heaven, in
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the estate of perfection, when God shall be in us all in all, and we shall be all in God. Some there are that inquire what kind of language we shall speak in Heaven? some reply, that we shall speak the Language of Angels, grounding their opinion upon what St. Paul speaks to the *Corinthians*, *When I should speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, If I have not charity, I am become as sounding Brass and a tinkling Simbal.*

But this is a *Chimerian* opinion, for as the Angels are pure Spirits, by consequence they can have no Tongue, nor proper language. I confess in some holy Apparitions, Angels have spoken to Men, but it was by moving the Tongues of their borrowed Bodies, or by employing some other corporal Organ, than they did speak in the Language of those unto whom they were sent, they had no particular or proper Dialect. But if Angels did speak, their Language would excel as much that of Men, as the Angelical Nature excels the Humane; by the Tongues of Angels therefore our Apostle understands an excellent Tongue, better than that of Men.

Others fancy, that in Heaven we shall speak no other Language but the *Hebrew*, because say they, that it is the Tongue which God hath sanctified from the beginning of the World, in which he spoke to the Patriarcks and Holy Prophets, in which he proclaimed his Law upon Mount *Sina*, in the audience of all the People of *Israel*, and in which he hath Recorded his Sacred Law with his own Finger. They say, that it is the Language which *Adam* did speak in the Earthly Paradise, in the estate of innocency, and which all the Inhabitants of the World did speak before God sent amongst them a Division of Tongues. Others are yet of opinion, that as then we shall attain to all knowledge and Sciences, we shall not be ignorant of all kind of Languages, but that we shall speak them all in a most perfect manner, and that with them we shall declare the wonderful Works of God, as the Apostles did at the day of *Pentecost*. As the holy Scripture is silent upon this matter, I shall affirm nothing. But

But in general terms, I may say, that as God caused a division of Tongues to punish Mans insolency and pride, and that as the differing Languages of People, is an effect of their Sin; it is most certain, that this confusion and difference shall be altogether taken away, and that nothing shall be said in Heaven, but shall be very well understood by all the glorified Saints. I may add moreover, that in case we should speak so well all manner of Languages which have been in the World, it is nevertheless very likely, that we shall all speak but one Language, that we may all praise God with the same voice; but whether this shall be the Holy Language, or another more perfect and majestick, which God shall sanctifie for this purpose, we cannot know, until God of his infinite Mercy shall have raised us to this estate of Glory and perfect Happiness. From what we have already said, *Christians*, you may easily understand, that our happiness hath three steps or degrees; the first is attainable in this Life, the second at the Egress of the Soul out of the Body, the third at the great day of our glorious Resurrection; for already in this Life, God bestows upon us the First-Fruits of his Glory, and the fore-tastes of Heaven. The Spirit of God and of his Glory, rests at present upon us, which fills us full of an unspeakable glorious joy, and with the peace of God which surpasseth all understanding. When our Souls depart out of this wretched and crasie Body, God gathers them up into the bundle of Life, he introduceth them into the blessed company of the Angels and Glorified Spirits, and admits them to the Contemplation of his Face, which is fulness of Joy. But in this joyful day when Christ shall come down from Heaven to judge the quick and the dead, he will carry us both in Soul and Body to the highest Glory and Happiness whereof we are capable; for this reason the Name of Glory is ascribed to this high degree of happiness, which is promised to us at the blessed appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, as in the 8 Chap. to the *Romans*, where the Apostle saith, *That the Crea-*

ture was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same, in hope, because the Creature it self shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Children of God. And in the 3. Chap. to the Colos. he saith, you are Dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is your Life shall appear, you shall appear also with him in Glory. Therefore this glorious appearing is stiled, a blessed Hope, that is to say, the fulfilling and accomplishment of all that we expect or hope for; as in the 2 Chap. to Titus, St. Paul saith, *We expect the Blessed Hope, the appearing of the Glory of our great God, who is the Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Then shall be the consummation of the Glory, and of the Head, and of the Members, for then the Son of God shall cause the Damned to feel that Power which he possesseth in Heaven and in Earth, and in the Depths; he shall discover himself to the faithful, in his greatest Glory and most Divine Splendor. Therefore this glorious Day of his descent from Heaven, with the Angels of his power, is mentioned as the first day of his *manifestation*, of his *appearing*, and of his *Kingdom*; for this cause, when the Holy Ghost speaks of this day, it stiles it, *The day of the Lord Jesus Christ*, or *the day of the Lord Jesus*, as also *the day of the Lord*, and *the day of God*. As it shall be the Day of the Lord Jesus, it shall also be our Day; therefore St. Paul calls it, *The day of our Redemption*, because that in this day, our Lord shall redeem our Bodies out of their Graves, and shall bestow upon, both our Souls and Bodies; *Eph. 4.* all the Fruits of that Redemption, which he hath purchased for us with his Blood, *Rom. 8.* and shall raise us up to the highest Glory and most perfect happiness, *Heb. 9.* It is the happy Day of the Consummation of our Marriage with this Divine Lamb. It is the day of our Joy and Triumph with the glorified Men and Angels. It is the day of our Coronation, and of our entrance into our Kingdom, when the King of Kings,
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the Lord of Lords shall Crown us with his own hand, and put us in possession of an Empire prepared for us from the beginning of the World. In a word, it is the day when we shall come to the Lord Jesus and be with him, as he is with the Father, that we be all in one.

Because of the glorious and wonderful things which shall come to pass on this day, it is named *The great day*. St. Jude calls it thus, when he speaks of the Revolted Angels, he saith, *That God hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under darkness, unto the Judgement of the Great Day*. In this manner many understand the words of St. John, when he describes the Foul Spirits, and likens them to Frogs, which he saw coming out of the Dragons Mouth, and of the Beast, and out of the Mouth of the False Prophet, and saith, *They are the Spirits of the Devils working Miracles; which God sent forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battel of that great Day of God Almighty*, Revel. 16.

Lastly, this glorious Day is not only called *The day of Judgement, the Day of the Lord, the Day of our Redemption, and the Great day*, but oft-times without any addition, it is stiled *the Day, and that Day*, as in the 10 Chap. to the Hebrews, *Let us consider one another to provoke unto Love and good Works, not forsaking the assembling our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching*. In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, *You are not in Darkness, that the Day should surprise you*. Thus in the 2 Epist. to Timothy, and first Chap. St. Paul saith, *I know whom I have believed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that Day*. And when he remembers the good and charitable Deeds of Mesiphorus, he prays for him in this manner, *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find Mercy of the Lord in that day*; And in the 4 Chap. speaking of himself, he saith, *I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness,*
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which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give at that Day.

It is so stiled, because of its excellency, it is the Day of Days, the end of all the Seasons, the Consummation of all Ages and Times, after this there shall be no more alteration of Days, Months and Years. Therefore an Angel is represented in the *Revel.* lifting up his hand to Heaven, swearing by the living God, who hath Created Heaven and all therein, the Earth and all things in it, and the Sea, and the things that are there, That there shall be no more Time; for instead of this unconstant time which flies away, without leaving any sign of its being an everlasting Eternity, shall succeed an Eternity always the same, always Blessed with Happiness, always glorious and joyful. This Divine and Magnificent Day shall begin at the end of other Days, but shall never draw to an end. Therefore St. Peter, in these words, calls it an Eternal day, or Eternity, 2 Pet. 3. *Glory be to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, both now and for ever, Amen.* And in expectation of this Day of Days, all Creatures are groaning and travailing in pain until now, but especially Believers, who have the First Fruits of the Spirit, groan in themselves, desiring with an earnest and holy desire, to see the breaking of this great and glorious Day. It is the end of all the Prophecies, and the accomplishment of all Gods gracious promises to his People in all the Ages of the World. It is the end and price of our Spiritual Calling, the fulfilling of all our desires and expectations, the Crowning of all our Labours, and the highest step of that glory and happiness unto which we pretend.

You, *Devout Souls*, that delight in the contemplation of Celestial things, I pray consider with me, the accomplishment and the perfection of three kinds of works, which have been succeeded by their several Rests. The first was that of the Creation of the World, for in six days God Created the Heaven and the Earth, and all things in them, and when he had finished his Works, and found

that they were good and perfect, he rested the seventh day, *Gen. 1. & 2.* Therefore he Blessed and Sanctified it. The second great work was that of Redemption, for when our Saviour had fulfilled all the Prophecies which mentioned him, when he had caused the meaning of all the ancient Types and Figures to appear in his person, and in his sufferings, when he had fully satisfied the justice of God, and purchased for us with his Blood, an Eternal Redemption, he cried out, *all is finished, John 19.* and he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost. After this, Christ had nothing more to do, nor to suffer, but he is gone into Heaven to Rest from all his Works, *Revel. 5.* and to take possession of all power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and praise. The third Work is that of our Glorification, when we shall see new Heavens appear, and a new Earth, when our Bodies shall be cloathed with Incorruption and Immortality, and united again to our Souls, and when in both Soul and Body we shall attain to the highest glory and most perfect happiness: Then he that sits upon the Throne of Eternity shall say with a loud voice, *Revel 21. All is finished.*

Afterwards the Sabbath of Sabbaths shall succeed that Eternal rest and that peace which shall never be interrupted by any unhappiness. We may say, that the first rest is that of God the Father, the second belongs to the Son, the third is the rest of the Holy Ghost, that shall have then gathered all the Saints together, reared up the House of God to the roof, and perfectly enlightened and sanctified the Catholick Church, from whence shall proceed its Eternal Glory and Happiness; or rather, we may say, that this last rest, is the rest of all the Three Persons, of the most holy and most glorious Trinity, for then they shall rest from all manner of Works for ever and ever, and we in the bosome of their Glory; we shall also enjoy an everlasting rest. When the Works of Creation were finished, the Works of Redemption were next expected, and after the Works of Redemption, we hope for the Works of our
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final glorification. But when God shall have brought us all into his Glorious Rest, and that he shall have declared for the third time from Heaven, *All is finished*, We shall then expect nothing, neither from Gods Justice, nor from his Mercy, for all Gods Enemies shall be then destroyed, and it shall not be possible to add any thing to the grievousness of their punishments, nor to the violence of their torments. There shall be no more Tears to be wiped, no more evils to be feared, nor advantages to be expected, nor Crowns to receive, for then all the Children of God shall be perfectly glorified. They shall enjoy God himself, who shall be their inheritance for ever, and the bottomless fountain of all their Delights, so that it shall not be possible to add any thing to their infinite Glory, nor to their Eternal Happiness. God shall then as it were, take away all means of expressing any greater liberality and bounty.

Abraham leaped for joy, when he saw the Birth-day and humiliation of the Son of God, how should we rejoyce and be transported out of our selves, when we think upon this glorious Day of the appearing of our Great God and Saviour? when with the Eye of Faith we behold him sitting upon the Clouds of Heaven, coming to put a period to Sin and Death, to shut up the Devil and his Angels in the bottomless pit of Hell, to deliver his Church from all Evils, Enemies, and Dangers, and to promote it to the highest felicity, and to an everlasting glory?

After this, *Believing Souls*, I must draw the curtain, and suffer my pen to fall from my hand, for mine eyes dazle at the sight of so much light, and my Soul is surprised at the consideration of so much glory and so perfect an happiness.

Although I have continued in this Treatise longer than I first proposed to my self, I must needs confess, that whatsoever I have said upon so rich and glorious a subject, falls far short of the Truth. But I am perswaded, that there shall be here enough, for pious and devout Souls,

that seek not for the ornament of Language, nor for the flourishes of Rhetorick, but seek for the true and solid comforts of Gods holy Word. You *Christian* and *believing* Souls, for whose sakes I have undertaken this Work, I intreat you by the Glory of God, and by your own Salvation, to preserve in your minds the *Ideas* of these things that I have now spoken of. Imprint them in your Memories, grave them upon your Hearts with the point of a Diamond, and especially take delight in following my direction, and you shall assuredly find both joy and comfort. Think often upon Death, let it be the most familiar and most pleasant subject of your discourse, expect it at every Moment, and lead such a Life, as if Death were already upon your Lips. Fear not the many troubles of this Humane Life, doubt not but that God hath determined the time and manner of your going out of the World, and that every kind of Death of the Children of God is precious in his sight. Seeing that you are to live yet but a moment here upon Earth, settle not here your Hearts, but enjoy your Riches and advantages, as not enjoying them, remembering that the fashion of this World passeth away; seeing that it is Sin alone, that makes Death appear so terrible to us, hate all manner of Vice, and study the practice of Piety.

And seeing that there is no body at the hour of Death but wisheth that he had lived well; think upon your latter end, and you shall never be able to sin. If your mind is disturbed with the consideration of those things which shall happen after our Decease, learn to rest upon the wise Providence of God, that sees into the depths of Eternity, that provides for all things, and that draws Light out of the greatest Darkness. Are you cast upon a Bed of Sickness and Disease, open the Eye of Faith, and you shall see your selves encompassed about with Holy Angels, and in the Arms of God himself, dread not the violence of pain, for God shall never forsake you in your Grief, he shall never suffer you to be afflicted above what you are able to
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indure; fancy him not as a dreadful and a merciless Judge, but look upon him as a gracious and a loving Father, who desires not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. If Death appears to you with a frightful Countenance, if it fill you full of Terror, cast your eyes, by Faith, upon the Crois of our Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall see there, all the Weapons and Armour of this Death broken in pieces. You shall see there a Divine and precious Blood running down, which hath satisfied for all our Sins, and marked unto you the way to Gods Eternal Sanctuary. Let not the Grave that is digging for you, terrify you, seeing that the King of Kings hath been laid there before you, and filled it with his most Divine Perfumes. Let Death seem to you never so Dreadful, remember that our Saviour hath overcome it by his Resurrection; fear not therefore to encounter it, seeing that our Great God and Saviour shall make you partaker of his Victory. And that you might beget in your Souls an earnest longing to go to Heaven, Look upon Jesus Christ there, who prepares a place for you, and desires that you should be eternally with him, to behold his Joy and Glory. Fear not the separation of the Soul from the Body, seeing that Death which shall separate you from your selves, is not able to separate you from the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, The Soul of our Souls, the Seal of the Promises of God, and earnest of our future Inheritance. Instead of looking backwards, and longing for these perishing advantages, and for Honours that can only dazle the eye; consider that Death shall wipe away all Tears, remove all your grief, and raise you above all the storms of the World, above all the miseries and troubles that cover the face of the Earth. That you may be able to follow this Death more chearfully, Remember that it draws you out of a place all polluted with Sin, and infected with Impiety, to transport you into a new Heaven, adorned with Righteousness and Holiness, and perfumed with the Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgivings of the Glorified Saints; remember that it frees you from

all remains of corruption, and gives Deaths wound to all your Lusts. Mind not so much the false appearance of Death, for to the wicked it is as it were the Subburbs of Hell, the jaws of the bottomless Pit, and the beginning of their endless Torments; but to you, *Believers*, it is the Gate of Heaven, an entrance into Paradise, and a passage to a most happy Life. Learn to relish now the Joys wherewith your Souls shall be for ever satisfied, when God shall Crown you with his Glory, and make you Drink of the Rivers of his Pleasure. Seeing that your Soul is going to put on a Garment of an Immortal colour, and to dwell for ever in the Palace which God hath built with his Almighty hand, Cast off willingly this wretched, crasie and corruptible Body; depart willingly out of this Earthly Tabernacle, which turns of it self into Dust. Consider well, that if it falls by Death, it shall rise again at the Resurrection, and that when it shall have been the Dwelling and the Food of Worms, it shall at last become the Temple of God, and the Tabernacle of his Glory. Finally, O Religious Souls, shut your eyes to the World, and to all the vanities in it which the World adores, and aspire to the real advantages which God hath prepared for you before the Creation of the World, and which you shall injoy, when the World shall be no more. Let your precious Faith, and your blessed Hope, enter into Eternity it self, to behold that extraordinary happiness and glory which God shall accomplish, when he shall bring us both in Soul and Body into his Celestial Paradise, to see his face, in which is fulness of Joy.

Seeing that this perfect happiness, and infinite Glory, which never entered into the Heart and thoughts of Man, shall never be perfectly accomplished, but at that Day when Jesus Christ shall appear from Heaven, to be glorified in his Saints, and to become wonderful in all Believers; Think always upon this Glorious Day, the end of all our wishes, the fulfilling of all your hopes, and the perfection of all the designs which God hath conceived in himself from all Eternity.

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You *Devout Souls*, that are grieved to see the World prosper, and *Satans* Empire flourish, to see Gods Children subject to all the Darts of Death, take good courage, and rejoyce with an holy Joy, for shortly all the Enemies of God and of your Salvatic shall be punished with an everlasting punishment, as from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his Power. Shortly, the Devil, his Angels, his Agents and Slaves, shall be bound up in Chains of Darkness, and cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and shut up in the bottomless pit. Shortly Death shall be no more, and this Church of Jesus Christ' whose Miseries and Afflictions cause you to weep, shall be shortly cloathed with unspeakable light and glory. It shall enter with Joy and Triumph into the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and you your selves shall sing with all the glorified Armies of Heaven.

Seeing that Christ shall come as a Thief in the Night, and shall surprise all the Children of the World unawares, prepare your Souls, *Believers*, with the love of God, and an expectation of your Merciful Lord; behave your selves in the same manner, as you would do, if you were now at the Eve of this great Festival, as if you did spie already the breaking of this most happy day. Entertain now the same affections and joy, as if you did hear the voice of God and the Trumpet of the Archangel, as if the Earth were already in a flame, and as if Jesus Christ himself were coming in the Clouds of Heaven. And seeing that no impure thing shall enter into the Heavenly and Holy *Jerusalem*, and that without Holiness no Man shall see the face of God, cleanse your selves, *Christians*, from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of the Lord; forsake all manner of Vice, give your selves over to Vertue, and to the practice of good Works, imitate the diligence of the Faithful Servant, that you may not be ashamed at the coming of your Great Master. Take heed that you be not like the Wise Virgins, that slept as well as the foolish, but watch and pray, that

you may not enter into Temptation, for the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Redeem the time, for the days are evil, and make haste to put on the Garments of Righteousness and Innocency; fill your Hearts with the Holy Oyl of Faith, of Hope and Charity. Take your Lamps in your hands, and let your Souls shine with a Divine Light.

In this blessed disposition, let us go and meet our Heavenly Bridegroom, and hasten his coming by our Prayers and Groans. Let our Souls be full of Love, let them sigh for our Divine Jesus, and being moved with the same affections as *St. John*, let us say to him with an earnest desire, *Come Lord Jesus*, and if he answers, *for certain I come quickly*; Let the Longing of our Souls increase more and more, that we may be able to Pray more fervently, and to cry out from the bottom of our Souls unto Heaven, *Come Lord Jesus, even come Lord, come quickly*. Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Believing Soul, that rejoyceth and comforts its self in looking upon Deaths Destruction, and the everlasting and Blessed Life which we hope to enjoy, both in Soul and Body after the Resurrection.

O Great Judge of the World, bottomless Fountain of Life and happiness, thy Gracious hand hath put into mine Heart the seeds of Immortality, the first fruits of Heavens Glory, and the foretaste of everlasting Delights. Thou hast made me to behold, by Faith, the joys and happiness of Paradise, where thou shalt receive my Soul when it shall depart out of this wretched World, and to Mediate upon the Glory which thou preparest for my Body, when thou shalt take it to thy self, to make it like to thy Glorious Body. Now raise my thoughts

thoughts and my hopes to this highest glory and happiness which thou hast promised to our Souls and Bodies, when thou shalt come down from Heaven with Flames of Fire, to revenge thy self of such as know thee not, and will not obey thy Holy Gospel, and to be glorified in thy Saints, and become wonderful in all Believers. Let me sometime consider that glorious Throne, where thou shalt sit to judge the quick and the dead, before which the greatest Princes, Kings and Monarchs, as well as the vilest Servants, Subjects and Slaves; and generally all the Men of the World shall appear to receive in their Bodies, according as they have done, whether it be good or evil. O that I might rejoyce in an expectation of seeing the total and intire destruction of all the Enemies of thy Glory, and of our Salvation. That I might look upon Satan his wicked Angels, his Agents, and the instruments of his Kingdom, as if they were already bound up in everlasting Chains, cast into the Lake of fire and brimstone, and shut up in that bottomless pit, from whence they shall never be released. That I might think upon that Blessed time, when Death shall be no more, when all the living shall be Immortal; but chiefly give me Grace to behold with the eye of that precious Faith which thou hast formed in my Soul, the Joy and Coronation of thy Church, to consider that Divine dwelling, where the stately and most magnificent City is built with pure Gold, Pearls, and Precious Stones, where thou thy self art the Light and the Sun, where the uncorruptible inheritance is which cannot be defiled, and cannot fade away, where the River of living water runs, which is as bright as Chrystal, where the Tree of Life is, which yields fruit every Month of the year, whereof the Leaves are for healing of the Gentiles. Give me Grace to comfort my self in the expectation of that blessed estate, where we shall neither hunger nor thirst, where there shall be neither giving nor taking in Marriage, but where we shall be as the Angels of God, where thou shalt cloath us with Light, and compass us about with the beams of thy Glory; where thou shalt put into our hands Palms of Victory, Crowns upon our Heads, and in our Mouths the Songs of the blessed,

blessed, and of all the Holy Angels, where we shall sit with the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Confessors and Martyrs, and with all the Princes, Kings, and Monarchs that have lived in thy fear, and that are dead in thy favour. Where we shall for ever solemnise the Divine Nuptials of the Lamb, and shall be inflamed with his love; where we shall behold God face to face, and shall be changed into his Glorious Image, and satisfied with his Divine likeness. O Lord, give us Grace to think continually upon his glorious and joyful day, which shall put a period to the current of time, which is the accomplishment of all the Prophecies and Promises, the body and reallity of all types and figures, the Crowning of all our Works, the fulfilling of all our desires, the highest of all our hopes, and the perfection of all the designs intended by God the Father from all Eternity. And seeing that we know not when this beautiful day shall break forth, which shall never end, give us Grace to expect it at every moment, and behave our selves in such a manner, as if we were already at the Eve of this everlasting Sabbath, and of this glorious Rest. That we may provide holy oyl in our Lamps, Faith, Hope and Charity in our Hearts; that these Lamps may be ready and always burning; that our Souls may be cloathed with the Wedding Garment, with Righteousness and Innocency; that we may not slumber in the vain Delights of the World, in the pleasures of the flesh, but that we may spend the days and the nights in Watching and Prayers. Give us Grace to lift up our heads, looking for our Redemption, as if we did already hear the sound of the last Trumpet; as if we did see already the Lord Jesus coming in the Clouds of Heaven. O that we might not only expect him, but go to meet him, and hasten his coming by our continual Prayers and earnest desires. O most powerful and merciful Lord, forgive our impatient wishes, and hasten that day for the elects sake. Lord Jesus come with the Angels of thy power, and the thousands of Saints, and cause thy glory to appear, and thine eternal Happiness. Come with the Weapons of thy just resentment to require Justice, and to destroy all the ungodly,

for

for there is no Faith nor Charity amongst Men: All flesh is become corrupt. Come and destroy this World, which is as an House infected with a spreading Leprosie, but rather come to free it from corruption and vanity, unto which our Sins have made it subject. Come and purifie, with an universal fire, this wretched Earth which was cursed for our Crimes. Come Almighty Lord, come and trample upon the pride of the World, and of all the Enemies of thy Sacred Truth. Come and execute judgement upon her that is drunk with the Blood of thy holy Martyrs. Come and bind the roaring Lyon in Chains, and shut him for ever in the bottomless pit. Come and put to Death the Murderer of thy Brethren and Members, and totally abolish it. Lord Jesus hearken to the crying of thy people, and to the groans of thine inheritance. Come and take thy Church out of this cruel Egypt, where our Sins have intbralled it; deliver it out of this Babylon, where it hath been kept so long in Bondage. O Merciful Lord, it is high time thou shouldest introduce it into thy Celestial Canaan, where the Milk and Hony of the most refined joys and Divine comforts flow continually. That thou shouldest bring it into the holy Jerusalem, the City of Peace and of everlasting Rest. Come therefore to wipe away the Tears, and stop the crying of thy afflicted Children. Come and take them out of this cruel and infamous Prison, open to them the Gates of thy Glorious Palace. Come and cloath them with thy Light, cause them to drink of the Rivers of thy pleasures, and Crown them with thine Immortal Glory. Lord Jesus, hasten this day of this Divine Coronation and magnificent Rejoycing. We have been fighting and travelling upon this Earth, long enough separated from thee, our Souls long for thee, they can no longer live without thee. O wonderful Lord, whose Works are so great, that they are past finding out, and whose Wonders are so many, that they are not to be numbred; thou hast with the Father perfected the Creation of the World; thou hast performed all the Works of our Blessed Redemption, perfect also the Works of the future Glorification of thy Church. Take us up to that highest
Glory

Glory and Happiness which hath been prepared for us from the beginning of the World ; and which is the price of thy Blood, and the fruits of thy Death. O bountiful and glorious Lord, put us in a condition, that we may have nothing to dread, nor nothing to desire, nor nothing to pray or wish for, but that we may only have cause to return to thee Thanksgiving, and to celebrate thy Divine praises. That in this glorious and everlasting day, we may sing continually with the Seraphims that fly about thy Throne, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts, all that is in the Earth is his Glory ; and with the Blessed Saints, now is come to pass Salvation and Power, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ, for Death is swallowed up into Victory ; the accuser of our Brethren is shut up in the bottomless pit ; he that accused them day and night before God : They have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb. They have not loved their own Lives unto Death. Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from all our Sins in his Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God his Father, to him I say, as to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be Glory, Power, and Dominion for ever, Amen.

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